

84
APR 30 '52

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY

The American **RECORD GUIDE**



APRIL, 1952 - VOL. 18, No. 8



Edited by

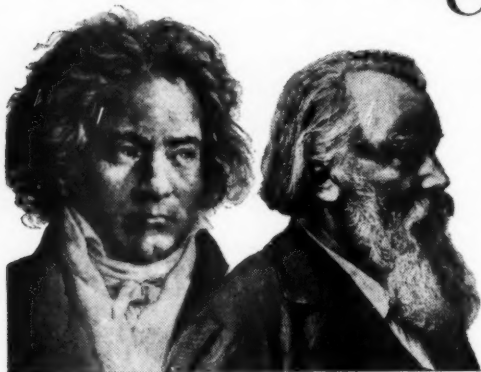
Peter Hugh Reed

Thirty Cents

**COLUMBIA ㊦ MASTERWORKS PRESENTS
AN OUTSTANDING ARTISTIC EVENT!**

**DEFINITIVE PERFORMANCES OF
BEETHOVEN and BRAHMS
CONDUCTED BY**

Felix Weingartner



Superlative performances—
all nine of the Beethoven
Symphonies and the four
of Brahms—by one of the
greatest interpreters!

A superb technical achieve-
ment incorporating the
latest modern advances in
disc recording—made in
response to countless
requests.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 1 in C Major,
Op. 21, Felix Weingartner conducting the Vienna
Philharmonic Orchestra. ML 4501

Beethoven: Symphony No. 2 in D Major,
Op. 36, Felix Weingartner conducting the London
Symphony Orchestra. ML 4502

Beethoven: Symphony No. 3 in E-Flat Major,
Op. 55 ("Eroica"). Felix Weingartner conducting the
Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra. ML 4503

Beethoven: Symphony No. 4 in B-Flat Major,
Op. 60, Felix Weingartner conducting the London
Philharmonic Orchestra. ML 4504

Beethoven: Symphony No. 5 in C Minor,
Op. 67, Felix Weingartner conducting the London
Philharmonic Orchestra. ML 4505

Beethoven: Symphony No. 6 in F Major,
Op. 68 ("Pastoral"). Felix Weingartner conducting
the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. ML 4506

Beethoven: Symphony No. 7 in A Major,
Op. 92, Felix Weingartner conducting the Vienna
Philharmonic Orchestra. ML 4507

Beethoven: Symphony No. 8 in F Major,
Op. 93, Felix Weingartner conducting the Vienna Phil-
harmonic Orchestra. **Beethoven: Symphony No.
9 in D Minor,** Op. 125 ("Choral"). Felix Weingartner
conducting the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra and
Vienna State Opera Chorus with Louise Helletsgruber,
Soprano, Rosette Anday, Contralto, Georg Maikl,
Tenor, and Richard Mayr, Bass. SL-165
(Symphony No. 8 also available on single record with
choral movement of Symphony No. 9. ML 4508)

Brahms: Symphony No. 1 in C Minor,
Op. 68, Felix Weingartner conducting the London
Symphony Orchestra. ML 4510

Brahms: Symphony No. 2 in D Major,
Op. 73, Felix Weingartner conducting the London
Symphony Orchestra. ML 4511

Brahms: Symphony No. 3 in F Major,
Op. 90, Felix Weingartner conducting the London
Philharmonic Orchestra. ML 4512

Brahms: Symphony No. 4 in E Minor,
Op. 98, Felix Weingartner conducting the London
Symphony Orchestra. ML 4513

COLUMBIA ㊦ RECORDS

Symbol of the Finest Quality in Long Playing Records

㊦ The exclusive trade-mark of Columbia Long Playing Records—symbol of highest quality. Look for it!
Trade-Marks "Columbia," "Masterworks," ㊦, ㊦ Reg. U. S. Pat. Off. Marcus Registradas

The American RECORD GUIDE



APRIL, 1952 Vol. XVIII, No. 8

formerly

The American Music Lover

Editorial Notes

COLUMBIA is to be congratulated on its expert dubbing job of Weingartner's performances of the nine symphonies of Beethoven and the four symphonies of Brahms. Considering the age of these recordings, the dubbings are remarkably good and in many cases better than many modern LPs being issued these days. Even the Beethoven *Sixth* — a collector's item from the Beethoven Centennial of 1927 — has startling qualities in its sound.

These re-issues, like many others of recent times, were in response to wide public demand, which indicates that the noted Dalmatian conductor's artistry has sustained enduring esteem. Indeed, many of his countless admirers in Europe and this country rate him above all others in the performance of Beethoven's symphonies. In my estimation, such an opinion is open to challenge, for it is doubtful that one man can achieve all-around satisfying performances of the nine symphonies.

Owing to the lateness of our review shipment of the Weingartner recordings,

a detailed discussion of them has to be postponed until next month. I marvel at some reviewers who seem to be able to handle an assignment like this in short order. It would assuredly seem that some reorientation with an LP version might be required, even though one knew the original issue.

* * *

I am reminded by several readers that I erred in referring to nations of the British Commonwealth of Nations as "colonial possessions." Some mistakes in copy by the printer necessitated the omission of a word, and the wrong one was removed. I had written "various, former colonial possessions" and the word "various" was to have been removed, instead "former" was deleted. I should hate to think that seeming ignorance of the political status of the foreign nations in question would be regarded as a mal-service on my part of international relations, as one Canadian reader intimated.

THE AMERICAN RECORD GUIDE, published at Pelham 65, N.Y. Editorial Office: 115 Reed Ave. Business Office: Room 11, Post Office Bldg.

●Peter Hugh Reed, Editor; Sidney Kleinman C. J. Luten, James Norwood, Associates; Philip L. Miller, Harold C. Schonberg, Donald Richie. Max de Schauensee, Bernard Lebow., Contributors. Paul Girard, Advertising and Circulation. Julius J. Spector, Art Editor.

●Published on the first of each month. The American Record Guide, sells at 30c a copy. Annual subscription in the U.S.A. and Canada, \$3.00. In all foreign countries, \$3.25.

●The contents of The American Record Guide are protected by copyright and may not be reprinted without permission in writing. No responsibility for unsolicited contributions.

●Change of Address — this requires a month's notice. No responsibility assumed for copies not received due to removal without notice. ●Correspondence must be accompanied by return postage.

●Reentered as 2nd class matter Nov. 7, 1944 at the Post Office at New York, N.Y. under the act of March 3, 1879. Additional re-entry at Post Office, Easton, Pa., June, 1950. (Contents copyright 1952 by Peter Hugh Reed.)

April, 1952

229

THE FUNNY SIDE OF THE PHONOGRAPH WORLD

X
By Ulysses "Jim" Walsh

THERE IS a large and growing literature concerned with the technical, cultural and historical aspects of recorded music, but by comparison, the phonograph's funny side has been neglected. Here is a string of amusing anecdotes, arranged in no particular order.

William Howard Taft was one of the most genial and intelligent men ever to occupy the White House. He was also, of course, the largest American president. But in 1912 the normally jovial Mr. Taft was having troubles, just as President Truman is today, forty years later. Former President Theodore Roosevelt had "bolted" the Republican party, splitting it straight down the middle, and was running on the Progressive ticket. Mr. Taft felt, with considerable reason, that he had been given shabby treatment by his erstwhile friend. He also knew that the result of the split would be to elect Woodrow Wilson, the Democratic nominee, whom he privately regarded as a peevish, one-track-minded college professor.

Although he knew he had virtually no chance of winning, the portly Taft didn't lose his sense of humor. He sent a message to George O'Connor, a noted Washington attorney and insurance company executive asking him to call at the White House. When O'Connor (also a brilliant comedian) came, the President said:

"George, the way things look now, I'm going to move away from this place on the fourth of March. That fellow Wilson will take my place. As we know what's going to happen, I think that you, as the official White House entertainer, ought to go

over to the Victor company's plant at Camden and record a couple of your favorite numbers for me as a souvenir of our friendship. The Victor people gave me a Victrola for the White House not long ago, and I know they'd be glad to make the records if I asked them."

"Why, sure, Mr. President," the surprised O'Connor returned, "of course I'd be glad to. But what songs do you want me to record?"

William Howard Taft's sides and stomach shook with hilarity as he replied: "Two of those blackface minstrel numbers you do so well--'If He Comes In, I'm Goin' Out' and 'Tain't No Disgrace to Run When You're Skeeered'!"

Entering into the president's whimsy, O'Connor went "over to Camden" and recorded the two songs, standard numbers in his repertoire. A few copies of the records were pressed and presented by Victor to Taft and O'Connor. When Mr. O'Connor related this anecdote to me not long before his death in 1946, he said he didn't know whether the Taft family still had copies of the record. He remarked that he had given away all his copies except one, which was "cracked but playable."

George O'Connor was a remarkable man. He began his career as a White House entertainer during McKinley's administration and remained a sort of privileged "court jester" and a prime favorite with all the presidents as long as he lived. As a boy growing up in Washington, he had made cylinder records in the 1890's for the old Columbia company. In 1915 he be-

The American Record Guide

came an exclusive artist for Columbia discs, and his records were popular for several years. He never made Victor records, aside from the two sung especially for President Taft. Mr. O'Connor said that one of his most amusing recollections was of the way President Franklin D. Roosevelt would writhe whenever somebody struck up "Home on the Range." That was a song that Roosevelt peculiarly detested, but one of his assistants, Marvin McIntyre, liked to form impromptu quartets and sing the number in barbershop style, so he circulated the report that it was FDR's favorite composition. The fabrication was so successful that the average American now religiously believes that "Home on the Range" was the Roosevelt song. Apparently, the President chose to writhe and bear the torture rather than express his true sentiments, but O'Connor quoted him as saying: "George, if you ever dare to sing that dirge in the White House, I'll shoot you!"

"So, of course," the roly-poly O'Connor chuckled, "I didn't sing it!"

As this is written, President Taft's son, Robert, is campaigning for the nomination of president by the Republicans, as are the constituents of General "Ike" Eisenhower. What an ironical twist it would be if Mr. Truman, conceding election by one or the other man, should approach the Victor company with a request to record his own piano interpretations of "If He Comes In" and "Tain't No Disgrace to Run When You're Skeered"!

King Edward Hears the Phonograph

It's a natural step after discussing an American president to mention the musical tastes of European royalty. Anecdotes which are still circulated reveal the late King Edward VII of England as a man of essentially plebeian tastes. So, judging from his autobiographical sketches (which appeared in *Life* in 1947), is the later King Edward who now has the title of Duke of Windsor. The first issue — for May, 1903 — of the one-time *Talking Machine News*, which was published in London until 1936, gives a revealing light concerning the musical tastes of Edward VII. From this it would appear that the head of what was

then the most powerful nation in the world shared the likings of his subjects. Either that, or the phonograph's repertoire was so limited 45 years ago that Edward just had to take what he could get, when the Edison Bell Company provided him with an instrument playing the large concert size cylinders, five inches in diameter. Said the *News*:

"It is by no means generally known that His Majesty, in common with his subjects, delights in the phonograph. On the occasion of the Royal visit to Portugal a representative of the Edison Bell Company was commanded to supply a special machine of the Concert size for use on the Royal yacht, the 'Victoria and Albert.' . . . His Majesty . . . expressed his satisfaction with the records, 48 in number. All loyal subjects will be interested, as showing His Majesty's musical tastes, to know the names of those selected. We give it therefore in *extenso*:

"Marches: El Capitan; Imperial Edward; Salvation Army Patrol; and New Century. Waltzes: Amoureuse; Tres-jolie; My Dream; Il Bacio; Over the Waves; and The Guards. Selections: Toreador; Three Little Maids; A Country Girl; Merrie England; H. M. S. Pinafore; and Belle of New York. Songs: The Huntsman; The House Agent; Mrs. Kelly; Mammy's Carolina Twins; The Midshipmite; The Pilgrim of Love; Piccaninny Mine, Good-night; Husheen; The Lily of Laguna; and the Laughing Girl. Overture: Morning, Noon and Night. Dances: Whistling Rufus; My Little Topsy; Away to Espana; and Cock of the North. Violin solo: Cavalleria Rusticana. Viola solo: Simple Aven. Flute solo: Scotch Airs. Piccolo solo: Light and Free. Bassoon solo: Charlie is my Darling. Banjo solo: Tarantelle. Xylophone solo: Souvenir of Bournemouth. Descriptive selections: Down South; Departure of a Troopship; and a Southern Jubilee. Quartette: Old Black Joe. Minstrel song: Lucky Boy. Dialogues: Casey Riding a Bicycle; Casey Crossing the Channel; Casey as a Magistrate; Casey Taking the Census; and Casey as a C. I. V."

The *T. M. N.* article leaves us in doubt as to what selection from *Cavalleria Rus-*

ticana the unidentified violinist played. There is an American flavor about some of the 48 titles, and the "Casey" monologues of course were made by the late Russell Hunting, an American comedian and recording expert, who had gone to England in 1899 and become associated with the pioneer Edison Bell Company. King Edward was fond of the banjo, and the late Vess L. Ossman, one of the most famous of early American recording artists, gave two command performances for His Majesty in 1903.

The still surviving Queen Wilhelmina of Holland was given a demonstration of the phonograph in 1895, when she was a girl. The machine was put through its paces by an Englishman, P. A. Smithurst, who reported that the young lady, like King Edward, was fond of Casey records. She also liked band pieces and "some records by the Dutch Dan Leno, a comedian whose name I can remember, but would find it hard to pronounce and quite impossible to spell."

A Royal "Everybody Works But Father"

One of the big American song hits of 1905 was "Everybody Works But Father," a delightful satire on an indolent head of a family. It was written by Jean Havez, a member of Lew Dockstader's Minstrels, and became the national rage because of Dockstader's "plugging." The *Youth's Companion* published a sad story about a man who worked overtime to buy his daughters the piano they longed for. One night he came home, heard them singing and playing "Everybody Works But Father" — and went out and shot himself through the heart!

A funny anecdote about the song has to do with the one-time King George of Greece. Greek and Rumanian kings seem to have a genius for taking their responsibilities lightly, and George was no exception, as his son, Prince George, well knew. This also is quoted from the *Talking Machine News*: "When some English warships were cruising in the Mediterranean, Greece's 'Sailor Prince' visited one of them. The officers set going a gramophone which, among other tunes, played *Everybody Works But Father*. Prince

George, who, like his father, speaks English and half the other languages of Europe, was highly delighted with the air and words . . . The Prince obtained the record, and gave a dinner in Athens to some of his intimate friends, at which he invited his father to be present. After the banquet, a concert was arranged, and . . . the *Everybody Works But Father* record was inserted first. Everybody present who understood English appreciated the criticism of King George, but no one laughed more heartily at the joke than he did."

Before dismissing the subject of royalty, I must admit that the most interesting thing to me in the Duke of Windsor's *Life* series was a photograph showing the children of King George and Queen Mary walking behind a Scotch bagpipe player. I was fascinated because the Scot is Henry Forsyth, who was the King's official piper, and one of my earliest recollections is of a 1904 Columbia record which my parents owned (I still have it), which was nasally announced as: "Medley March — Jenny's Bawbee. Puh-layed by Pipe-Major Forsyth. Columbia Rec-cord!" I had a photographer make me an enlarged copy of the picture, not because of the royal youngsters but because I wanted the likeness of Forsyth!

Mr. Edison's Idiosyncrasies

American presidents and European kings had their admirers, but for most plain people of a generation ago Thomas A. Edison was the greatest man in the world — a sort of super-wizard who produced amazing inventions by pure magic. On the other hand, old-timers around the Edison laboratory at West Orange, N. J., recall him affectionately as a quaint character with innumerable idiosyncrasies about which they laugh reminiscently to this day.

One of the inventor's oddities was borrowing chewing tobacco from workmen with a promise to pay back the "chaw," but never doing so. Mr. Edison also smoked cigars, but cigarettes were positively forbidden in his laboratory. Today Edison employees smoke cigarettes in front of a time clock which bears a notice affixed by "the Old Man" himself that

The American Record Guide

anybody indulging in the hellish things will be fired. His objection was not so much to the tobacco as to his belief that cigarette paper contained acrolein, which he described as a deadly poison that shattered nerves and brain.

Perhaps the funniest story I've heard about Mr. Edison is one which must be related with a certain amount of delicacy and restraint so as not to offend the intellectual, erudite and pure-minded readers of this publication. At any rate, some 35 years ago, the inventor, who vehemently objected to anything like a tremolo in the human voice, thought he had discovered the cause for the offensive unsteadiness, insofar as women singers were concerned. His theory was that their tremolo resulted from a purely feminine physical vibration above the waist, and that it would be corrected if the offending appurtenances were tightly strapped.

So Mr. Edison gave orders that experiments were to be made. Before any more women's voices were recorded, the ladies must be covered from the waist up with tightly fitting tape. A laboratory employee was nonplussed when he was told that it was up to him to do the swathing. "How in the heck," he pitifully inquired, but not of Mr. Edison, "am I going to approach those women with a proposition like that?"

The Lady Acquiesces

Finally he brightened. "Lizzie Spencer" he said, "is a good scout. I'll see what she thinks about it." So he diffidently approached Miss Spencer, whom "the Old Man" considered to have the purest soprano voice he had ever heard, and told her of the Wizard's wishes. Elizabeth had a strong sense of humor, and laughed merrily. She said that no sacrifice could be too great for the sake of art, so the blushing henchman did a comprehensive job of binding her so tight she could hardly breathe. The recording experiment was then made, but alas for Edison's theory! what tremolo Miss Spencer had ever possessed was still there. So, to everybody's relief, the "strap-'em-up" scheme was abandoned.

April, 1952

The Edison company made a determined effort to publicize its revered chief as a lover of "classical music," and Mr. Edison himself seems to have believed that he was a better judge of the merits of such music than anyone else. But the truth was that his tastes, like those of King Edward, were commonplace. His favorite song was the ballad, "I'll Take You Home Again, Kathleen," and he had his favorite tenor Walter Van Brunt (known later as Walter Scanlan) make at least fifteen different disc masters of it. He was also extremely fond of old-fashioned "coon songs" such as "Nigger Loves His Possum," and issued many ballads and blackface skits that were popular during his boyhood, regardless of their negligible selling qualities. Because of this, Edison had a reputation for marketing more "dogs" — songs that wouldn't sell — than any other company.

Edison and Chopin

Andre Benoist, who has been Albert Spalding's accompanist for many years, told me of one of his Edison recording experiences. He played a Chopin opus and, as always with Edison, the piano recording was remarkably fine. Everybody was delighted — everybody except Mr. Edison, whose approval had to be obtained before any record could be placed on sale. He was partly deaf but listened to records by placing the smaller half of a cylinder phonograph horn in contact with the internal horn of a Diamond Disc instrument, and formed his opinions accordingly. The opinions were scrawled on small slips of paper. And this is what he wrote about Benoist's record: "Rotten. Ain't got no tune." So the long-suffering Andre recorded "Old Black Joe, with Variations."

Another story, probably apochryphal, relates that when Rachmaninoff had his first engagement at Edison, he began by playing the first bars of Liszt's Second Rhapsodie so softly that the recording apparatus didn't pick them up. It was obviously necessary to ask him not to be so subdued, but all the regulars around the place hesitated to approach the great man. Finally a fellow who was hanging

around said he'd do it. He walked up to "Rocky," nudged him in the ribs and said something, at which Sergei grinned and began playing loud enough to be recorded.

Later the volunteer was asked: "What did you say to Rachmaninoff?" and he airily replied: "Oh, I just says, 'Say, you damn Rooshian, play louder!'"

But, as I've hinted, I rather doubt that story.

The Big Victor Fire

During my childhood, the Sunday edition of the *Philadelphia Press* was widely read in the small Virginia towns where I lived, and I revered the Press as a model of accurate, conservative news gathering. I still think it deserved my opinion, but at least once the city editor allowed an imaginative reporter's pen to run riot.

On Sunday, April 24th, 1904, the entire instrument plant of the Victor Talking Machine Company at Camden was destroyed, with the loss of about a quarter of a million records. And here is part of what the *Press* reporter wrote:

"There were several thousand talking machines on which cylinders had been placed. When the flames reached the floor where these were stored, the heat set all the machines working, and for a few minutes there was a volume of noise that would have made a steam calliope sound like a penny whistle. In the machines were scores of popular songs and recitations and dozens of reproductions of stirring marches by bands. With them all going at once it was Bedlam broke loose. Half-a-dozen machines were giving a spirited rendition of *There's a Hot Time in the Old Town To-night*, while from others there pealed the notes of *Fireman, Save My Child*.

"Geel!" exclaimed a young hoseman, as he paused to listen. 'This is the first time I ever worked at this trade with music on the side.'

"The performance did not last long, however. In a few minutes the floor fell and the machines went down to the solemn accompaniment of the *Dead March in Saul*. Some of the firemen who heard the machines playing from a distance thought

that people had been penned in the building and were crying for help. These had to be held back from rushing to the rescue of the supposed victims. It took four hours to get the fire under control. The Victor Company had only recently erected the building and consequently occupied it for only a short time. The firm estimates the value of the stock and machinery at from \$500,000 to \$750,000, which is covered by insurance in 75 companies. Six hundred and 75 men and women were employed in the building and enough orders were on hand from China, Japan, Russia, Germany and other foreign countries, as well as from many citizens in the United States, to keep them busy until July."

The *London Express* facetiously reported that the fire was started by an incendiary, whose life had been made miserable by incessantly hearing Victor records of "Hiawatha." And Leonard W. Lillingston, the wittily sardonic editor of the *Talking Machine News*, commented: "As a piece of imaginative work we have never read anything to equal the *Philadelphia Press* man's effort. It is pure poetry; no other term will describe it. In the face of that fact, we cannot object to the statement that the fire 'set the machines working,' machines 'on which cylinders had been placed,' though the Victor . . . Company does not make cylinder records at all, but is, as everyone knows, the American Gramophone Company, and this, though it was not a *record* but a *machine* factory! . . . The way in which those machines selected the tunes appropriate to the occasion as the fire progressed is just wonderful. Little wonder that in Darkest Africa and other remote parts, they look upon the talking machine as a living thing. Meanwhile, we congratulate the *Press* man once more. He will pardon us if at the same time we shed a tear for poor old Ananias. It is hard on him after all these years."

Incidentally, although the pioneer phonograph companies were constantly suing each other on charges of patent infringement, the Columbia people proved their big-heartedness by placing the full facilities of their plant at Victor's disposal. A

The American Record Guide

little more than ten years later, Edison had an even more disastrous fire, and the Edison Bell Company, of England, was burned out several times.

(To be concluded next month)

Toscanini's "La Bohème"

PUCCINI: *La Bohème* (complete); **Licia Albanese** (Mimi), **Ann McKnight** (Musetta), **Jan Peerce** (Rodolfo), **Francesco Valentino** (Marcello), **Nicola Moscona** (Colline), **George Cehanovsky** (Schaunard), **Salvatore Baccaloni** (Benoit and Alcindoro), **Chorus** and the **NBC Symphony Orchestra** conducted by **Arturo Toscanini**. RCA Victor LP set LM-6006, 2 discs, \$10.90.

▲TOSCANINI'S incisive orchestral direction inevitably dominates any opera that he presents. Even over the air-waves and in a recording, a novice could recognize the vitality and beauty of the man supervising the show. This performance of *La Bohème*, long overdue on records, marks a historical landmark in opera. Recording was a feeble art at best when Toscanini conducted Puccini's opera for the first time at Turin on February 1, 1896. None of the singers nor the conductor could have foreseen that he would honor Puccini in a fiftieth celebration of the opera by this performance in February 1946. In his long career, I doubt that the conductor thought of recording the work until this occasion presented itself. Singers may go, for voices do not all withstand the vicissitudes of time, but conductors like Toscanini seem never to lose their powers. His presence in our midst at an advanced age, which is belied by his enthusiasm and vitality, is a cause for thanks to the omnipotent powers that be. One need not grow sentimental to acknowledge the wonder of his presence, it is a fact that should evoke gratitude.

In no other opera that Toscanini has conducted in recent years has the artistry of the principles been so satisfying as this one. There may be preferred singing in *April*, 1952

other versions of this opera, but the principles here are thoroughly at home in their respective parts and do justice to their assignments. The Mimi of Albanese is memorable — she was in her best voice when she sang this performance, and Peerce's Rodolfo has an expressive quality that this competent artist has not always equalled. Toscanini's love for this music incited him to join in on more than one occasion, and the presence of his husky voice seems less of a ghostly competitor than an echo of the countless memories he cherishes of past performances of this opera. Having been at both rehearsals and performances of the opera in 1946, experiences I regard among the most memorable of their kind in my career, I welcome this recording which substantiates and sustains my original estimation of the events. Victor has done a notable job in the reproduction giving a fullness and liveness to the performance which was non-existent in the studio. —P.H.R.

OTHER OPERAS

FLOTOW: *Martha* (complete) (in German); **Erna Berger** (Lady Harriet Durham), **Else Tegetthoff** (Nancy), **Eugen Fuchs** (Lord Tristan Mickleford), **Josef Greindl** (Plunkett), **Peter Anders** (Lionel), **Franz Sauer** (Sheriff of Richmond), **Chorus of Berlin Civic Opera and Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin** conducted by **Arthur Rother**. Urania LP set 217, 3 discs, \$17.85.

NICOLAI: *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (complete) (in German); **Wilhelm Strienz** (Sir John Falstaff), **Georg Hann** (Ford), **Hans Florian** (Page), **Walter Ludwig** (Fenton), **Ludwig Windisch** (Slender), **Edwin Heyer** (Dr. Cajus), **Irma Beilke** (Mrs. Ford), **Marie Luise Schilp** (Mrs. Page), **Lore Hoffmann** (Anne Page), **Chorus of the Berlin Civic Opera and Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin** conducted by **Arthur Rother**. Urania LP set 214, 3 discs, \$17.85.

▲**URANIA** should hit the jackpot with its performances of these operas. The *Merry Wives* tops a former issue by Oceanic, which was not complete. These may be radio performances but they have life and verve. The orchestral direction in both is consistently vital and rhythmically alert. There is not a really poor singer in either cast. Berger is a wholly ingratiating Martha and Tegetthoff a pleasing Nancy. Anders has the sympathetic quality of voice for the sentimental Lionel, though some of his singing lacks ease. Fortunately, he is at his best in the best known arias and duets. Griendl's Plunkett has a vocal virility in keeping with the rough young farmer. Beilke, in the *Merry Wives*, is a vivacious and personable Mrs. Ford, and Shlp and Hoffmann round out a capable and believable trio of busy women. The men in this opera are well cast — the sonorous voiced Strienz as Falstaff, the late Georg Hann as Mr. Ford, and Ludwig as Fenton.

Both *Martha* and the *Merry Wives* dating from the middle of the 19th century are more or less typical of their period. Flotow was an ingenious craftsman though his style was eclectic and his melody somewhat commonplace and too sentimental. Nicolai, on the other hand, had a true spark of genius and his setting of Shakespeare's comedy has bright and spontaneous humor as well as melodic freshness that appeals. The opera deserves to be revived in this country. Despite the greatness of Verdi's *Falstaff*, it does not follow that Nicolai's opera with its consistent good humor has not a place in the scheme of things. —P.H.R.

• **OFFENBACH:** *Orpheus in the Underworld* (sung in French); **Andre Dran** (Aristee and Pluton), **Bernard Demigny** (Jupiter), **Jean Mollien** (Orpheus), **Claudine Collart** (Eurydice), **Monique Chalot** (Venus), and others, **Paris Philharmonic Orchestra and Chorus** conducted by **René Leibowitz**. Renaissance LP set Sx-204, 2 discs, \$11.90.

▲**IT HAS** been said that Offenbach's opera bouffe "was a genuine echo of the

cynical caprice of the third Napoleon's time — theatrical extravagance paired with farce — satire with vulgarity." Certainly, his *Orpheus in the Underworld*, which has been recorded by a first-rate French cast, proves to be one of the most delightfully amusing experiences of its kind that has come to records. The story is a satire on the mythological tale of *Orpheus and Eurydice*. In some ways, it could be a satire on a modern cinema celebrity, a noted singer or actor. It's a tale that will always remain undated. Orpheus is represented as a violinist and teacher of music whose wife despises him as much as he dislikes her. When she runs away with Pluto, public opinion demands he reclaim his wife. There can be no scandal in the life of an artist. Other gods are involved, one of whom — Jupiter — manages to solve the situation so happily that everybody joyously dances the can-can at the finale. The overly familiar overture is not included in the recording but the spoken dialogue, essential to the plot, has been. For a highly diverting evening, hear this recording. Everybody associated with it is deserving of praise.

—J.N.

PURCELL: *Dido and Aeneas*; **Eleanor Houston** (Dido), **Adele Leigh** (Belinda), **Rita McKerrow** (Attendant), **Evelyn Cuthill** (Sorceress), **Heather Harper** (First Witch), **Joan Clarke** (Second Witch), **Henry Cummings** (Aeneas), **John McCarthy** (Sailor; Spirit); **Stuart Chamber Orchestra and Chorus** conducted by **Jackson Gregory**. Period LP disc SPLP-546, \$5.95.

▲**DIDO AND AENEAS** is one of the unaccountable works of music. Composed in 1689 to an unlikely libretto by Nahum Tate for performance in a girls' school, it remains not only the first genuine English opera but probably the greatest. How the young ladies managed to negotiate its broad and noble melodic lines we will of course never know, but today we do not consider it music for amateurs. Indeed neither of the earlier recording casts was

The American Record Guide

altogether satisfactory, and a new version has been eagerly awaited.

It would be too much to say the need has been completely filled. The most important of the singers, Miss Houston as Dido, has a fine voice and a good clean musical style, but the breath of passion is not in her; it is not difficult to take her at her final word and "forget her fate." However, in justice it should be added that as she sings the famous aria she does not leave us in doubt as to its greatness. But her singing throughout the set is pretty much on one level; there is no climax in her vehement outburst *How fierce in arms* or in her line about the thunder. Miss Leigh as Belinda sings rather prettily, but Mr. Cummings' Aeneas is all too British, nor is he made the more impressive by a lisp. The Sorceress and her minions are a pretty tame crew, which is unfair to Tate, for surely these characters must be kidded a little. John McCarthy, doubling as the Spirit and the Sailor, plays both parts in perfect deadpan, with little differentiation. The very important choral parts are smartly sung and the recording is satisfactory.—P.L.M.

SPONTINI: *La Vestale* (complete opera); Renato Gavarini (Licinio), Maria Vitale (Giulia), Alfredo Fineschi Cinna), Giuliano Ferrein (Pontifex Maximus), Elena Nicolai (High Priestess), Albino Gaggi (Consul), Chorus and Orchestra of Radio Italiana conducted by Fernando Previtali. Cetra Soria LP set, 3 discs, \$17.85.

▲GASPARO SPONTINI (1774-1851) lived in a time when the historical opera was in vogue. His place in history seems to have been as an intermediary between Mozart and Meyerbeer. He had considerable success in his time beginning with the spectacular *La Vestale* (1807) whose pre-tentious libretto deals with a vestal virgin whose love for a Roman hero is stronger than her love for the Goddess Vesta. Scenic color and display are an important part of this opera, which one might label a forerunner of *Aida*, as it opens with the return of the conquering hero and winds

up with a tomb scene in which the sinning vestal virgin is to be buried alive. Unlike *Aida*, such realism is not pursued (this was a period in which the happy ending was effected) as a favorable omen from the Goddess releases the maiden from her sacred vows. No one seems to consider that the magic fire enkindled on the altar is the result of an opportune thunder storm. Such natural phenomena in Roman days were regarded as the work of the gods and goddesses.

La Vestale, which was given at the Metropolitan in 1925 for Rosa Ponselle, is best remembered today for its overture and two arias that Ponselle recorded. Ironically Spontini, who glorified in historical opera, has been mainly buried in history books. Despite his careful studies of Mozart and Gluck, he does not seem to have had the requisite genius to stand shoulder to shoulder with them or to rise above them. Highly finical and a true despot, he dealt in exaggerations both as a man and a musician. *La Vestale* follows the methods of Gluck but musically it is coarser in quality for all its massive construction. Yet, it has a certain dignity.

What it lacks is a relieving lightness of touch — it is too consistently stern and tense in drama. It abounds in passages which can rightfully be labelled musical noise. But the fact that Spontini knew his orchestra and knew how to develop its potentialities lends a certain impressiveness to his music.

It is the orchestra in this recording which remains the most convincing protagonist. Previtali handles the reins of his assignment like a true Roman charioteer of old; he rides the crest of the surging waves

MONTHLY RECORD SALES OF

RARE AND OBSOLETE VOCAL RECORDINGS by great artists of the past can be bought at YOUR OWN PRICE at our Mail Auctions. All bidders receive free of charge the selling price of each lot after the sale. Write for lists. Established 1938.

DIXIE RECORD CLUB

Room 1135 DuPont Bldg., Miami 32, Florida

with fervor and assurance, and he gives the vocalists full support. What a difference a full orchestra like this can make in a recording. It was sound logic for Gatti-Casazza to revive *La Vestale* in 1925 as he had great singers like Ponselle, Edward Johnson, DeLuca, Mardones and Matzenauer, with Serafin in the orchestral pit to do notable justice to the occasion. An opera like this needs such artistry, just as Gluck's operas do, to sustain appeal. The singers here, though undoubtedly competent and experienced artists, are lacking the opulence of tone which this type of music needs. Maria Vitale has sufficient musical assurance to carry her through the taxing role. However, there is too much unsteadiness and strain in her singing. The tenor Gavarini has a dark, robust quality but little refinement. Fineschi, the baritone, has a healthy, resonant voice. Nicolai, the High Priestess, has vocal opulence and, while not the smoothest vocalist, she makes her part live auspiciously. Radio Italiana's well-trained chorus does justice to its considerable assignments. The reproduction is in keeping with Cetra's realistic achievements, though not suggesting the opera house with the consistently forward placement of the singers. —P.H.R.

VERDI: *Otello* (complete opera); Gino Sarri (Otello), Antonio Manca Serra (Iago), Athos Cesarini (Cassio), Mino Russo (Roderigo), Carlo Platani (Lodovico), Virgilio Stocco (Montano), Anna La Polla (Desdemona), Ada Landi (Emilia), Chorus and Orchestra of the Rome Opera House conducted by Alberto Paoletti. Urania LP set, 3 discs, \$17.85.

VERDI: *Otello* — Excerpts; Ramon Vinay (Otello), Eleanor Steber (Desdemona), Frank Guarrera (Iago), Metropolitan Opera Orchestra conducted by Fausto Cleva. Columbia LP disc ML-4499, \$5.45.

▲URANIA'S recording of *Otello*, accomplished in the Rome Opera House, proves to be a better presentation than its predecessor issued in 1932 (Victor set 152). It

is a better than average performance from an Italian opera house, and I have heard quite a few. The three main participants are talented singers with youthful voices. It is rare to hear an Otello who is not vocally beyond his prime, or who does not consistently strain his vocal chords. Sarri has an appealing quality of sound, though he has not yet fully grown into the role. However, it is pleasing to hear an Otello who does not leave one with the impression that he ruptured his vocal chords in some forgotten battle. This was the impression that Fusati and Martinelli gave me in their recordings.

Although Vinay's conception of the role has grown in dramatic intensity and force since he first sang it, he strains his voice consistently and his chesty and often explosive high tones do not sound like a true tenor. To my ears, though Sarri is not as powerful or forceful an interpreter, there is more music in his voice. Moreover, he adheres to pitch better. That he, like most, is unable to sing softly where required — notably in the closing phrases of the duet at the end of Act I — is no news. The only tenor I ever heard that did was Pattiera and that is in the recording reissued by Eterna, unfortunately a half key too high.

Considering the intelligence and expressive qualities of Steber's Desdemona on the Columbia disc — her opening phrases in the Love Duet are truly memorable — one could have wished that she had been the Desdemona in the Urania set. La Polla possesses a good voice but her artistry is not as yet sufficiently developed. Her best singing is heard in the final act. Guarrera is not matured enough for a telling performance of Iago, nor is his vocal equipment as free as Serra's. The latter penetrated the character most effectively. There is deceptive subtlety in his interpretation which underlies the sinister qualities of the character to perfection. In many ways, his Iago recalls the late Pasquale Amato whose performance was one of the greatest.

The balance of the cast in the Urania are competent with Cesarini giving a first-rate account of the part of Cassio. Paolet-

The American Record Guide

ti's orchestral direction is sound — admirable in the lyrical passages but lacking in the fire that Toscanini summons to the dramatic ones. Columbia's recording is superb with an equitable balance between voices and orchestra. Urania's reproduction unduly favors the singers. —P.H.R.

ZANDONAI: *Francesca da Rimini* (complete); **Maria Caniglia** (Francesca), **Ornella Rovero** (Samaritana), **Mario Tommasini** (Ostasio), **Carlo Tagliabue** (Gianciotta), **Giacinto Prandelli** (Paolo il Bello), **Mario Carlin** (Malesestino dall'Ochhio), **Amalia Oliva** (Biancofiore), **Licia Rossini** (Garsenda), **Grazia Colaresu** (Donella), **Anna Maria Canali** (Altichiara and Smaragagdi), **Aldo Bertocci** (Notary), **Enrico Campi** (Archer, Jester and Tower Warden), **Orchestra and Chorus of Radio Italiana** conducted by **Antonio Guarnieri**. Cetra LP set, 3 discs, \$17.85.

▲FOR THOSE who found Montemezzi's *L'amore dei tre re* a rich and unusual experience in Italian lyric drama, Zandonai's *Francesca da Rimini* should prove to be a welcome addition to their operatic library. This opera, based upon d'Annunzio's play which once starred the renowned Eleonora Duse, reflects a modern trend in Italian opera in which dramatic sequence is not broken up by set arias. A friend of mine has characterized the four acts of *Francesca* as four tone poems, which while not quite a true assessment nevertheless gives an idea of the composer's musical handling of dramatic situations. His rare skill for writing for the orchestra never permits one to forget the role it plays as a leading protagonist. In its opening section, *Francesca* boasts one of the most beautiful acts in all modern Italian opera. Here, indeed, is the feeling of the tone poem, skillfully wrought to portray the emotions of the characters and the atmosphere of the scene. Actually, Zandonai's technique is a blend of the old and the new, and his medieval effects in his score —

notably in the opening act — are highly effective in creating the right atmosphere. The composer's care in mating words to music was exceptional. The assessment of Zandonai's talents given in the foreword of Cetra's booklet is a just one. He aimed for and achieved true "poetry of mood and emotional intensity, as well as opulence of color and high technical craftsmanship." When this opera was presented at the Metropolitan in 1916 — with Frances Alda, Edith Mason, Martinelli and Amato — it proved a successful venture. Perhaps the expense of mounting the opera prevented its inclusion in the repertoire for a longer time.

The cast assembled for this recording is a highly competent one and the performance is completely praiseworthy. This release should dissipate those derogatory remarks from domestic and foreign sources which would have us believe that Radio Italiana's operatic ventures are strictly radio presentations, not comparable to those given in leading opera houses. The complete excellence of this performance suggests that the cast was drawn from an operatic presentation at La Scala or Rome. There is much vocal beauty in Caniglia's Francesca. That she is shrill on occasion can be forgiven as the role is a taxing one. Prandelli's Paolo sustains the impression that he has made on records and in the opera house — he is one of the most gifted tenors of today, who can sing a true *pianissimo*. Tagliabue gives a forceful and polished performance of the husband who becomes a murderer at the end of the opera. In a cast as large as this one, it is not possible to speak of everyone in a few words — suffice it to say the women in the first act do justice to Zandonai's lovely music, and the others credibly handle their respective roles.

Guarnieri's orchestral direction has incisive orderliness and requisite polish. He achieves tonal delicacy and dramatic fervor, rhythmic incisiveness and fluency. The balance between voices and orchestra is unusually well handled and the reproduction is live and resonant. —P.H.R.

Record Notes and Reviews

THERE IS IN SOULS a sympathy with sounds, and as the mind is pitched the ear is pleased with melting airs or martial, brisk or grave; some chord in unison with what we hear is touched within us, and the heart replies.

—William Cowper

Orchestra

ARENSKY: *Variations on a Theme of Tchaikovsky*; **GRIEG:** *Holberg Suite*; Harold Byrns conducting his chamber orchestra; Capitol LP disc, P-8158, \$4.98.

▲YEARS ago Riemann said of Arensky, "In his tendency as a composer he more nearly approaches Tchaikovsky than the radical young Russian school." This is an understatement but it clearly indicates the affinity underlined in these charming variations on the song, *Christ Had a Garden*, from Tchaikovsky's *Children's Songs*. Appearing initially in Arensky's String Quartet *Opus 35*, they were later arranged for orchestra and have since been his most popular work. Byrns' performance, the first on LP, is one of the best this smiling work has received on discs.

Grieg's ingratiating tribute to Ludwig Holberg, the well-known 18th-century Danish playwright, is just as popular as the Arensky. In five short quasi-classical movements, it evokes Holberg's century without making any specific references to the man or his work. Simple as these little pieces sound, they are deceptively difficult to play and I still prefer the well unified performance by the Boyd Neel Orchestra.

chestra (London LPS 173). Byrns contributes a much more illuminating performance than the only other one on LP, that of Hanson on Columbia.

The recording sounds very much alive and the differentiation between the various string groups is particularly good.

—D.R.

BEETHOVEN: *Symphony No. 1, Op. 21*; **HAYDN:** *Symphony No. 103 (Drum Roll)*; Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Charles Munch. Victor LP disc, LM 1200, \$5.72.

▲ALL TOO many performances of Beethoven's *First Symphony* present merely its Haydnesque aspects and I'm afraid that this recording of Munch is one of them. The minuet, which Henderson calls "revolutionary in conception" is a good point of comparison as it is the most original part of the work. Where Toscanini and Weingartner begin slowly and allow both volume and momentum to increase, thus insuring a musical drama, Munch sails into it as blandly as he might a Haydn minuet. Both the former conductors seem to encourage the growing chaos in the orchestra while Munch restrains it. This objection does not belittle the final effect of his reading, one both lofty and spacious.

The Haydn "Drum-roll" is done with precision and taste. If the more vulgar

The American Record Guide

spirits are out of place in this work, then it is a very fine performance. I prefer my Haydn a bit more ungirdled. In addition the Boston Orchestra has become so lush that it sounds good enough to eat and I like my Haydn less juicy. The strings are particularly luscious. Both works are extremely well reproduced. —D.R.

BERLIOZ: *Symphonie Fantastique*, Op. 14; **Philadelphia Orchestra** conducted by **Eugene Ormandy**. Columbia LP disc ML-4467, \$5.45.

The Same: **Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam** conducted by **Eduard van Beinum**. London LP disc LLP-489, \$5.95.

▲THE CASE of the *Fantastique* on LP has thus far been one of frustration. That eminent Berlioz scholar Jacques Barzun reported in these pages that Monteux's noble conception of an ever fascinating work was offset by an orchestra that could not quite take all of the technical hurdles. Our editor pointed out that Paray's interesting interpretation was offset by a recording deficient in sonic charm.

The case here is happily different. Eduard van Beinum reads the work perfectly and he has a good orchestra under him; the London recording is acceptable according to anybody's standards. What this version lacks is a feeling of abandon and an imaginative adjustment of the various colors and weights present in the score.

Both of the above elements are manifestly exhibited in Eugene Ormandy's work. Aside from the fact that this conductor cannot quite give shape to the first movement and that therein are a few graceless portamentos that seem out of place, this is to your reviewer's taste the long-awaited recording of the *Fantastique*. Here one encounters the playing of the greatest orchestra of our time, a superb recording up to the best standards we have known, and — let us not forget — Mr. Ormandy. Far too often of late in commenting on glowing performances out of Philadelphia have reviewers passed the intelligence that the Philadelphians played beautifully with scarcely a word to pay

Ormandy the respect that is due to his really excellent leadership.

All hail then to everyone who had anything to do with this memorable Columbia recording — and especially to Eugene Ormandy. —C.J.L.

BRAHMS: *Symphony No. 1 in C minor*, Op. 68; **Philadelphia Orchestra** conducted by **Eugene Ormandy**, Columbia ML disc, ML 4477, \$5.45.

The Same: **Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam** conducted by **Eduard van Beinum**. London LP disc, LLP 490, \$5.95.

▲THESE two discs bring the total LP issues of the work up to seven. Like the previous recordings these two contain definite beauties of performance marred by occasional lapses. There will probably never be a recording of this work that satisfies everybody. Ormandy has inside track most of the time and so should probably be considered winner but this does not mitigate the obvious integrity of the van Beinum performance. The Philadelphia Orchestra is an awe-inspiring music-making machine and probably the finest orchestra in the world. Further, from his previous recordings, Ormandy's persuasive way with Brahms is well known. But, just for these reasons, the listener may feel the symphony is too slicked-up for its own good. Each solo is treated as though it were a perfect miniature instead of an integral part of the whole and, occasionally, rubato stretches whole sections out of all proportion. Still, the underlying concept is a strong one as Ormandy always stresses the inner rhythm of the work, even at the expense of making the *allegretto* sound like a Beethoven contra-dance. Van Beinum, on the other hand, presents the more conventional four-square aspect of the work. This allows a delicate restraint missing from Columbia's rather impassioned performance. Consequently van Beinum's finale is a model of dignity while Ormandy's is practically hair-raising in its intensity. The recordings are both excellent but Columbia's is somewhat cleaner and more free from reverberation.

—D.R.

DVORAK: *Nature, Life and Love* — Three overtures, *Amid Nature*, Op. 91; *Carnaval*, Op. 92; *Othello*, Op. 93; and *Nocturne for Strings*, Op. 40; **Vienna State Opera Orchestra** conducted by **Henry Swoboda**. Concert Hall LP disc 1141, \$5.95.

▲MOST listeners are familiar with Dvorak's *Carnaval Overture* with its Salvoic mirth, jollity and noisy bustle. Some may know *Amid Nature*, which has been recorded, but few will know *Othello* — one of his finest orchestral works, unjustly neglected. Originally, Dvorak intended these three overtures to be played together under one title of *Nature, Life and Love*. Later, he gave each a specific and individual title to indicate their programmatic intentions. The composer stated when he presented these overtures in concert in New York, in 1892, that the first work *Amid Nature* expressed his fondness for nature and the reverent feelings which it stirred in him in a "solitary walk through meadows and woods." Life, full of boisterous gaiety, and clangor, was depicted in the second, he said, and the third was an "embodiment of the gentlest and fiercest expressions of love," an expression of some of the emotions engendered in him by the final scenes of *Othello*. This latter with its sombre and impassioned texture is the most impressive of the three.

Swoboda, a Czech by birth, gives admirably forthright performances of the first two overtures. In the third, I feel he misses some of the finer points of the music, as he also does in the lovely, Wagnerian *Nocturne for Strings*. But the fact that this program is recorded with a brightness and liveness of tone which suits the music should make this disc a welcome one. —J.N.

GERSHWIN: *Cuban Overture; Porgy and Bess* — Selections; *Songs* — *Mine; Love Walked In*; **Andre Kostelanetz and his Orchestra**, Columbia LP disc, ML 4481, \$5.45.

▲IN 1932 Gershwin vacationed in Cuba and, during the same year, completed this glowing tribute to the island. The work, originally called a *Rhumba Overture*, is alternately boisterous and pensive and

like all late Gershwin, is slicked-up within an inch of its life. The jacket notes state that "a critic" has called it "more exciting even than Ravel's *Bolero*." The selections from Gershwin's 1935 opera are *Summer-time; Bess, You is My Woman Now; I Got Plenty of Nuttin'* and *It Ain't Necessarily So*. Of the two songs, the first is from 1933's *Let 'Em Eat Cake* and the latter was in the 1937 film, *The Goldwyn Follies*. Mr. Kostelanetz plays the overture relatively straight; as usual he "dresses-up" the songs. Very lifelike recording. —D.R.

GLAZOUNOV: *The Seasons; French National Symphony Orchestra* conducted by **Roger Désormiere**; Capitol LP disc, PB157, \$4.98.

▲THIS exquisite score may be ranked with the very finest ballet music of the 19th-century — that of Tchaikovsky. Like him, Glazounov is at his happiest when writing choreographically and in a frankly popular tradition. His evocation of the four seasons is one of his very best works. Some time after the ballet's success in 1900 Glazounov compiled a concert suite and recorded it for Columbia (CM 284). The present recording provides a welcome replacement. After a very cold winter the score gets underway with a gently melodious spring. Summer is personified by an enchanting carousel-like waltz and the well-known gallop of the *faunes*. It is still the autumnal bacchanale, however, that proves the climax of the work and a slight flaw in the present performance might be that Désormiere cuts out the vivid variation of the satyr. As in all good 19th-century ballet there is a poetic apotheosis in the firmament.

Désormiere's winning way with ballet music is well-known but in this performance he outdoes himself: not only is the music eminently danceable but it is also highly listenable. The recording is very good, particularly in its delineation of the solo instrument. —D.R.

HAYDN: *Symphony No. 94 in G major (Surprise)*; **MOZART:** *Symphony No. 33 in B flat, K.319; Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam* conducted *The American Record Guide*

by **Eduard van Beinum**. London LP disc, LLP 491, \$5.95.

▲THE POPULAR Haydn work boasts six LP recordings and this newest one has its decided merits, among them being a meticulous regard for tempi and a nice feeling for melodic flow. It also has a number of demerits, the foremost being lack of dramatic interest. The work got its subtitle, "*the Surprise*," from a full orchestral chord in the midst of the *andante* and Haydn is supposed to have said: "That will make the ladies jump!" Van Beinum's "*Surprise*" doesn't make me jump, at least not the way Beecham's does. Hence it is not surprising to find that the present conductor moulds the slow movement in a very lovely fashion but seems to drag the more lively ones.

This is by no means disastrous in the Haydn but it is more serious in the Mozart, a completely joyful work of which Saint-Foix has said, "here is certainly a work imbued with the Viennese spirit, abounding in delicious rhythmic and harmonic details." There is a measured dignity in van Beinum's approach which does not precisely encourage the bubbling vitality of the music. The wonderful finale, practically a *melee*, was expertly handled by Von Karajan (Columbia ML 4370) and it is his quality of spontaneity which is missing from the present performance. Again, the details are lovingly worked out and the tempi are as precise as Beecham's. Both works have been well recorded by the London engineers. —D.R.

MOZART: *Symphony No. 21 in A, K.134; Symphony No. 19 in E flat, K.132; Ton-Studio Orchestra* conducted by Gustav Lund. Period LP disc 538, \$5.95.

MOZART: *Symphony No. 24 in B flat, K.182; Ton-Studio Orchestra* conducted by Hans Michael; *March in F, K.248; Divertimento No. 10 in F, K.247; Ton-Studio Orchestra* conducted by Gustav Lund. Period LP disc 545, \$5.95.

MOZART: *Concerto for Flute and Harp in C, K.299; Karl Friedrich Mess (flute), Dora Wagner (harp); Horn Concerto No. 1 in D major, K.412;*

April, 1952

NEW **DECCA** Gold Label **ALBUMS**

MOZART
QUINTET IN A MAJOR, K. 581
for clarinet and strings
REGINALD KELL, Clarinet
FINE ARTS QUARTET
of the American Broadcasting Company
DL 9600 • \$5.85 33 1/3 rpm

RICHARD STRAUSS Conducts
EIN HELDENLEBEN, Op. 40 (A Hero's Life)
BAVARIAN STATE ORCHESTRA
Solo Violin: Placidus Morasch
Recorded by Deutsche Grammophon (in Europe)
DL 9602 • \$5.85 33 1/3 rpm

J. S. BACH
PIANO CONCERTO NO. 1 IN D MINOR
PIANO CONCERTO NO. 5 IN F MINOR
LUKAS FOSS
THE ZIMBLER STRING SINFONIETTA
DL 9601 • \$5.85 33 1/3 rpm

VIRTUOSI DI ROMA
RENATO FASANO, Director
MARCELLO : **ALBINONI**
ARIA IN A MINOR : **CONCERTO IN**
for strings : **D MAJOR, Op. 9, No. 7**
for violin and strings
CIRRI : **PERGOLESI**
CONCERTO IN : **CONCERTO NO. 5 IN**
A MAJOR : **E FLAT MAJOR**
for 'cello, flute and strings : for four violins, viola, 'cello and continuo
DL 9598 • \$5.85 33 1/3 rpm

DEBUSSY
TWELVE ETUDES (1915) (Books I and II)
MONIQUE HAAS, Piano
(Recorded by Deutsche Grammophon in Europe)
DL 9599 • \$5.85 33 1/3 rpm

RICHARD TAUBER FAVORITES
Sung in German—Selections include: *Matinata—La Paloma—Santa Lucia—Farewell, Corica—Serenata—Gypsy Love—Liebesleid und Liebesfreud—Rakoko Love Song—Speak To Me Of Love (Parlez-moi d'Amour)—Plaisir d'Amour—Tränen weint jede Frau so gern (Every Woman Gladly Sheds A Tear)—Es muss ein wunderbares sein*
DL 9597 • \$5.85 33 1/3 rpm
9-297 • \$6.05 45 rpm

ROBERT SCHUMANN
DICHTERLIEBE, Op. 48 (A Poet's Love), Song Cycle
(Recorded by Deutsche Grammophon in Europe)
WALTHER LUDWIG, Tenor
Michael Raucheisen, Piano
DL 7525 • \$3.85 33 1/3 rpm

DECCA

Gold Label **RECORDS**

PICKERING
RECORD PLAYING EQUIPMENT

*For flawless reproduction
of the works of the masters*

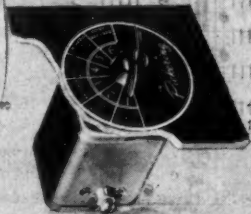


Pickering diamond stylus pickups and related components are the exclusive choice of musicians and lovers of music who insist upon the finest. Engineers acknowledge Pickering audio components as the best available. In every test and performance comparison, they demonstrate their superiority; recreating all the music pressed into modern recordings with the fidelity and realism of a live performance.

Pickering components are created for listening pleasure by Audio Engineers who know music and who know the tastes of discriminating listeners.



The wear and tear of the diamond styli in these cartridges is many times



...the diamond cartridges have no equal.
The wear and tear of the dia-
mond styli in these cartridges is many times
greater than that of styli made of sapphire, the next hardest
material. Because resistance to wear preserves the precise
shape of the stylus point, the life and quality of your valua-
ble record collection is insured.

Don't impair the musical quality of your priceless records.

Use Pickering diamond stylus cartridges ... they not only
wear longer but, more important, they preserve the musical
quality and prolong the life of your record library.

By all measures, Pickering diamond stylus cartridges are
more economical.

PICKERING & COMPANY, Inc.
Oceanside, L. I., N. Y.



Pickering High Fidelity Components are available through leading radio distributors everywhere; detailed literature sent upon request. Address Department E.

Gerhard Goermer (horn), Ton-Studio Orchestra conducted by Gustav Lund.
Period LP disc 544, \$5.95.

▲SOME surprisingly tidy performances from a chamber orchestra of Stuttgart, Germany. Mr. Lund, a capable conductor, keeps the music flowing in an animated and forthright manner. One could ask for more detailed attention and nuanced rubati, such as Beecham achieves, yet these early works of Mozart fare very well in such guileless renditions. Moreover, the reproduction is tonally good with proper resonance, though the acoustical qualities suggest a studio. In the first disc, the balance is not quite as good as in the other two, as the wind instruments are dominated by the strings, but the music remains appealing.

Mozart's symphonies Nos. 19 and 21 were written at Salzburg in his sixteenth year. They show a development in handling of the form especially in the finales. No. 19, scored for 2 oboes, 4 horns and the usual strings, is published with two different slow movements, the first of which — marked *Andante* — Einstein contends is "full of personal unrest and rebellion," while the other marked *Andantino grazioso* is more delicate in style. The latter is used in the present performance. No. 21, scored for 2 flutes, 2 horns, and the usual strings, shows more imaginative invention. It owns a lovely *Andante* with singing lines and considerable delicacy (its opening phrase suggests the Countess in *Figaro*), and a lovely menuet with some fascinating devices in the trio. Mr. Lund observes all the repeats in these symphonies, which I am not certain is the best procedure in the outer movements as it makes the works unduly long.

Symphony No. 24 is really an overture in the Italian style, which Einstein believes may have been written in anticipation of an opera commission. Mr. Michael gives it a lively performance, which is more admirable for its orderliness than its expressive qualities. The *March* and *Divertimento* are products of the composer's twentieth year and were pieces for social occasions. It is quite possible that the *March* was linked with this *Divertimento* in performance, perhaps with the six in-

strumentalists making their entrance and exit playing it, as Einstein says, and the *Divertimento* proper being performed "in a candle-lit arbor." The scoring of this work is for string quartet with obbligato horns. It consists of six movements and seems a bit lengthy for general listening despite its attractive melodic qualities. It is unfortunate that dividing bands between the movements have been omitted. The performances of both these works are nicely handled though the *Divertimento* would have profited with more imaginative treatment.

Mozart's concerto for flute and harp was devised for two Royal amateurs at Paris in 1778. It is not without its charm but remains a weak composition. The harp part offers no problems. There is more elegance in this music than the present ensemble gives it, but the straightforward, healthy prospectus of conductor and soloists makes for agreeable listening. Everybody seems to be enjoying himself. The concerto for horn is incomplete, its middle movement having been lost. It is not as imposing a composition as the later horn concertos, though its humor can be made appealing. The soloist has a rather fat, tubby tone which hardly does true justice to the music. The reproduction of the above is quite realistic and on the whole well balanced.

—P.H.R.

PROKOFIEFF: *Russian Overture, Op. 72*; **Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra** conducted by **Hans Steinkopf**; *The Love for Three Oranges* — **Suile**; **Radio Berlin Orchestra** conducted by **Arthur Rother**. Urania 10" LP disc, URLP 5005, \$4.75.

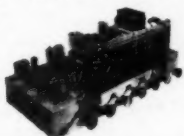
▲IN 1932, when he was already quite famous, Prokofieff returned to Russia. Since that time he has won the sympathy and admiration of the world for his continued individuality under a regime which does not precisely smile upon it. Admirable as this is, there is no denying that the quality of his work has fallen off. The 1936 overture is an example of this. It is a long, bumptious and inflated piece. Chauvinistic by its very nature, like so much late Prokofieff, it is, in its way, as pompous as some of Richard Strauss, and

The American Record Guide

Two Quality Products . . . "Combined To Provide Top Audio Reproduction"

Sun Radio brings you the combination of components from two leading manufacturers of precision engineered audio equipment.

- The radio tuner, complete with tone control and equalization for Records, AM, FM, Tape or Television Sound, affords the Music Lover the ease and convenience of a central control for all media.
- The amplifier, newest in design, offers the latest in engineering development, "A Transformerless Circuit".



BROWNING RJ-20B FM-AM TUNER

Designed for high-fidelity receiving applications.

SPECIFICATIONS:

AM Band: 530 to 1650 KC.

FM Band: 88 to 108 MC.

Panel switch selects FM, AM, Phono, TV or Recorder.

Sensitivity: FM, less than 10 mv; AM, 5 mv.

Automatic Frequency Control assures correct tuning on FM. May be disabled at will by means of switch.

FM utilizes Armstrong circuit.

Two stages of audio amplification employed with treble and bass controls giving 20 db boost in either tone range.

AM: 9 KC bandwidth on broad position and 4 KC on narrow band position.

FM: Audio response flat from 15-15,000 cycles ± 1.5 db. Audio output voltage 1.5 volts RMS.

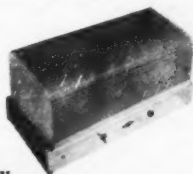
Circuit contains 15 tubes.

Dimensions: 7 1/2" H. x 17" W. x 9" D.

Shipping Weight: 26 lbs.

NET PRICE \$175.17

WRITE TO SUN RADIO FOR FURTHER AND MORE COMPLETE INFORMATION.



THE NEW 500D DIRECT DRIVE AMPLIFIER

- No output transformer.
- Frequency response $\pm 1/4$ db 20 to 70,000 c.p.s.
- Distortion is less than 1/2 of 1%.

Stephens Tru-Sonic 500D Direct Drive Amplifier is the first amplifier to successfully eliminate the output transformer. All distortion introduced by transformers is now eliminated. The great clarity of tone is noticeable at once in systems incorporating this superb amplifier. Hum and noise are at a minimum. Frequency response is $\pm 1/4$ db 20-70,000 cps, which is achieved with far less phase shift than can be obtained with a transformer . . . especially on the lower end.

SPECIFICATIONS:

Output Impedance: 500 ohms nominal.

One side ground.

Dimensions: 7 3/4" wide x 15 1/4" long x 7" high.

Weight: 20 lbs.

NET PRICE \$138.00

FREE!

Sun Radio's "Audio Equipment Handbook"

Sun Radio will send you free of charge a 132-page catalog of down-to-earth information on "How To" assemble, install or improve music reproducing equipment in the home. Write today to Dept. H or come in for your Free Copy.



Open Daily 9-6, Sat. 9-4:30

just as empty. It does not contain the excusing fervor of *Alexander Nensky* or the lyric beauty of the last two symphonies and, while it is a good many cuts above similar exercises by Khachaturian and Kabalevsky it remains of essentially the same material. The performance is properly spirited and the recording is a bit harsh.

The other side of the disc contains music the precise opposite of this: the orchestral suite from Prokofiev's every-lovely 1919 opera based on the Carlo Gozzi play. The score, cosmopolitan and often eclectic in nature, contains some of the composers' most brilliant and witty writing. In six sections, the suite follows the general plan of the opera: a sarcastic overture among the critics; the infernal card-game in hell, a waltz-presto; the extremely famous march and scherzo in the desert; the lovely song of the princess of the final orange and the flight, wherein the wicked are sent below and the virtuous are married. The music is extremely well interpreted and contains much of the magnificent *elan* of the Desormiere performance. The recording is splendid.

—D.R.

PURCELL: *Timons of Athens* — *Excerpts*; *The Fairy Queen* — *Excerpts*; **Ensemble Orchestral de l'Oiseau-Lyre** conducted by Anthony Lewis, with Margaret Ritchie (soprano). L'Oiseau-Lyre LP disc 16, \$5.95.

▲NOT SO LONG AGO Allegro issued a two disc set (ALG-60) of 16 selections — mostly vocal — from Purcell's delightful *Fairy Queen*. Here, we have only five, two of which are vocal. As a sample of the score, this disc is a valued souvenir, especially as the vocal selections are the moving *Plaint*, which recalls Dido's famous *Lament*, and *Hark! the ech'ing air a triumph sings*, though the latter here is sung as a solo, while in the Allegro record it is heard by soprano with chorus.

The real interest in this disc lies in the music from the *Masque* that Purcell wrote at twenty for a presentation of Shakespeare's *Timon of Athens*. The overture and dances are particularly attractive, full 248

of grace and beauty, and the two songs — *Cupid's Song* and *The Care of Lovers* — have a delicacy and charm which are irresistible. It is the ever spontaneous music-making of Mr. Lewis that distinguishes these performances and the alert and fluent playing of the harpsichordist, Geoffroy-Dechaume. Miss Ritchie, a pleasing soloist, handles the florid lines with ease but her singing sometimes lacks convincing expression. The unnamed trumpeter deserves a word of praise for his part in the performances. This is a record which all should make an effort to hear. The reproduction is live and well balanced and has more than an edge on the earlier *Fairy Queen*. —J.N.

RANGSTROEM: *Symphony No. 1 in C sharp minor*; **Stockholm Concert Association Orchestra** conducted by Tor Mann; London LP disc, LLP 514, \$5.95.

▲LONDON is showing a commendable interest in modern Scandinavian composers: last month the recording of Nielsen's symphony and now this one by the prominent Ture Rangstroem, who died in 1947. This symphony, completed in 1914, is subtitled "August Strindberg in Memoriam" — the eminent Swedish dramatist having died two years before. Rangstroem, anxious that his work should not be considered a program outlined his intentions as follows — "A skilled painter can do a fine portrait of Strindberg. . . A musician could perhaps achieve a copy of Beethoven, but that is called plagiarism . . . it is not possible to fabricate even a plagiarism of Strindberg in music. The symphony is simply an emotional experience." In its four movements the work contains reflections of greatly varied emotions, from the funeral to the defiant. There is little joy. The music is always dark and sometimes heavy. For this reason I presume, it has been compared with some of Sibelius' symphonies but to my ear the affinity is more strongly toward Tchaikovsky. Individual as the composer is, there are distinct echoes of the masculine pathos and dark poetry found in the Russian composer. The performance and recording are first-rate.

—D.R.

The American Record Guide

ROSSINI-RESPIGHI: *Rossiniana* — Suite; Berlin State Opera Orchestra conducted by Hans Steinkopf; **JANACEK:** *Sinfonietta*; Symphony Orchestra of Radio Leipzig conducted by Vaclav Neumann. Urania LP disc: 7030, \$5.95.

▲AS WELCOME as these works may seem on LP, neither performance can be called first-rate, nor are the recordings completely satisfactory. In both cases, the string tone is coarse and the balance far from ideal. Despite its age, Beecham's performance of the Rossini-Respighi suite has more freshness and graciousness, and the Kubelik-Czech Philharmonic Orchestra version of Janacek's *Sinfonietta* (HMV) is a more forceful and telling rendition of this powerful and highly imaginative score — a work that deserves to be known and more widely played. It was the last orchestral opus of its gifted composer, dating from 1925-26, two years before his death. —P.H.R.

ROUSSEL: *Petite Suite*, Op. 39; **DEBUSSY:** *Petite Suite*; Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Sergiu Celibadache. Urania 10" LP, URLP 5006, \$4.75.

▲IT IS too bad that this first LP performance of Roussel's ingratiating suite is so bad that it misrepresents the music. Celibadache weighs down on the orchestra with a hand of iron and the results are as heavy and as lumpy as dough. Under such treatment this well-integrated little score simply falls to pieces. The entire effect is rendered even more sodden by an orchestra which does not know its parts very well and fluffs quite a few notes. One need only compare this recording with the exquisitely spirited reading by Charles Munch (Decca ED-37), to realize how thoroughly a bad performance can break a score. Debussy's minor suite fares no better. Celibadache gives it the same treatment and it emerges as full-blown as a Gounod "symphony," with naturally ludicrous results. In addition the recording is no better than it should be and presents a very muddy series of noises. —D.R. *April, 1952*

ROUSSEL: *Symphony No. 3*, Op. 42; Symphony Orchestra of Radio Leipzig conducted by Ernest Borsamsky; *Bacchus et Ariane*, Suite II, Op. 43; Radio Berlin Orchestra conducted by Karl Rucht. Urania LP disc, URLP 7037, \$5.95.

▲THE MUSIC of Albert Roussel contains some of the finest pages written in this century. Neglected since his death in 1937, it embodies a buoyant energy and an elegiac charm rare in any age. His third symphony, written in 1929 for the 50th anniversary of the Boston Orchestra, is a fine example of Roussel at his best.



ENGLISH & EUROPEAN RECORDS & BOOKS

- Specializing in books and records, current and cut-out. Rapid and efficient service.
- Enquiries and Want Lists welcomed.

THE RECORD GUIDE

by Edward Sackville-West &
Desmond Shawe-Taylor

\$4.50 post free

or \$5.00 brings with your order the copy of "The Record Guide" & English Catalogs.

S. A. RENTON — TIPTREE
COLCHESTER, ESSEX, ENGLAND

In four movements the work is cyclic in nature, as befits the work of a d'Indy pupil, and moves effortlessly from an athletic *allegro* to an *adagio*, tragic in its intensity but containing a capital fugue in the middle, and from a *vivace*, which is actually a marvelous fast waltz worthy of Chabrier, to a completely exhilarating *allegro con spirito*. If the technique of Roussel in this work must be given a name it might be called "classic" in that logical contrapuntal and harmonic canons are always observed. But one must accept the term with reservations for, in Roussel, these forms are used in a consummately original manner and with a regard for taste and balance that is completely French. The suite of excerpts from the ballet, through its very nature, is much more loosely written. Covering the second act, Ariane's desertion by Theseus and her eventual union with Bacchus, this vast score, conceived in panoramic outline, contains moments of overpowering brilliance as well as pages of the quiet charm so typical of its composer. For the pure joyousness of the concluding pages one must return to the finale of Ravel's *Daphnis* for comparison.

Fortunately the performances of both these works are extremely fine. Both conductors very intelligently allow Roussel to speak for himself and both orchestras are capable of the extreme nuance this music requires. In addition the recording is both clear and spacious, one of Urania's best.

—D.R.

SOWANDE: *African Suite*; Strings and Harp of the **New Symphony Orchestra** conducted by **Trevor Harvey**; London LP disc LPS 426, \$4.95.

▲THIS is music by a very anglicized African. If I had had to guess the composer my choice would probably have been either early Arthur Bliss or, perhaps, late Eric Coates. This is not surprising when one considers that the forty-seven year-old Sowande was educated at King's College in Lagos and has been organist and choir-master to the West London Mission since 1944. Like Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, he particularly excels in the sort of salon music that is amenable to touches of

regional color. These are few and far between in this work. Perhaps the music of the dark continent has become completely imperialised for, despite the rather elaborate program notes of the composer I was unable to find anything in this very pleasant music I would have considered as all African. The performance is very tender and the recording is most faithful to string tone.

—D.R.

SCHUMANN: *Symphony No. 1 in B-flat, Op. 38*; **Boston Symphony Orchestra** conducted by **Charles Munch**; RCA Victor LP disc, LM 1190, \$5.72.

▲IN 1843 Schumann wrote the conductor Taubert: "If only you could breathe into your orchestra, when it plays, that longing for spring! It was my main source of inspiration when I wrote the work in February, 1841. I should like the very first trumpet-call to sound as though proceeding from on high. . . In the following section of the introduction, let me say, it might be possible to feel the world turning green; perhaps. . . a butterfly fluttering. . . About the finale I do, however, want to tell you that I would like it to describe a Farewell to Spring and hence do not want it to be taken too frivolously." How pleased Schumann would have been with Munch's performance! From the opening trumpets to the finale *grazioso* it is a paean to the present season. The first movement, so apt to lag, is absolutely joyous and the meditative *larghetto*, built very much like some of the composer's *lieder*, reinforces the quieter kind of happiness. The scherzo is slower than usual and the finale is faster. This makes a contrast between the two not often heard in performance. Munch also keeps an extremely tight rein on his sometimes wayward orchestra and the result is an interpretation with as much strength as novelty. The recording is almost perfect in all respects.

—D.R.

STRAUSS: *Sinfonia Domestica, Op. 53*; **Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra** conducted by the composer. Vox LP disc PL-7220, \$5.95.

The Same: **Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra**
The American Record Guide

RCA VICTOR RECORDS

present another operatic triumph!

ARTURO TOSCANINI

conducts the complete

“**La Bohème**”

Now for the first time you can enjoy at home the Maestro's incomparable reading of this beloved score. In this historic performance Licia Albanese and Jan Peerce triumphantly re-create their Metropolitan Opera roles as Mimi and Rodolfo. Others in the cast: Salvatore Baccaloni, George Cehanovsky, Ann McKnight, Nicola Moscona and Francesco Valentino . . . NBC Symphony Orchestra. WDM 1646, \$11.44. LM 6006, \$11.44

More new Red Seal performances

Haydn: Symphony No. 103, in E-Flat, "Drum Roll." Boston Symphony Orchestra, Charles Munch, conductor. WDM 1621, \$2.83. **Beethoven: Symphony No. 1, in C, Op. 21.** Boston Symphony Orchestra, Charles Munch, conductor. WDM 1622, \$2.83. Together on LM 1200, \$5.72

Spanish Folk Songs. 12 selections by Falla, Granados, Guridi. Victoria de los Angeles, soprano. Gerald Moore at the piano. WDM 1635, \$5.14. LM 131, \$4.67

Mozart: Sonata No. 40, in B-Flat, K. 454. Mischa Elman, violinist. Wolfgang Rosé at the piano. WDM 1634, \$2.83. LM 1208 (with Paganini: *Caprice, No. 24, in A Minor, Op. 1*) \$5.72

Chopin Polonaises, Vol. I. Polonaises Nos. 1-6. Artur Rubinstein, pianist. WDM 1629, \$6.29. LM 1205, \$5.72

Chopin Polonaises, Vol. II. Polonaise No. 7 and Andante Spianato and Grande Polonaise in E-Flat. Artur Rubinstein, pianist. WDM 1643, \$3.99. LM 152, \$4.67

Brahms: Schicksalslied, Op. 54 (Song of Destiny) and Beethoven: **The Ruins of Athens Overture.** San Francisco Symphony Orchestra, Pierre Monteux, conductor. With Stanford University Chorus. WDM 1637, \$2.83. LM 149 (with Bach: *Passacaglia and Fugue in C Minor*) \$4.67

Ibert: Escales (Ports of Call) and Berlioz: **Dance of the Sylphs** from "Damnation of Faust," Act II. Leopold Stokowski and his Symphony Orchestra. WDM 1628, \$2.83. LM 151, \$4.67

Mahler: Lieder eines Fahrenden Gesellen (Songs of a Wayfarer). Blanche Thebom, mezzo-soprano. With orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. WDM 1627, \$2.83. LM 1203 (with *Songs of Hugo Wolf*) \$5.72

Songs of Rudyard Kipling. 8 selections, including "Danny Deever" and "Boots." Leonard Warren, baritone. RCA Victor Orchestra, Frank Black, conductor. WDM 1630, \$5.14. LM 147, \$4.67



Prices shown are suggested list, including Federal excise tax. Add local tax. Subject to Government Price Ceiling Regulations.



chestra conducted by Clemens Krauss. London LLP-483, \$5.95.

▲IN JANUARY, February and March of 1949, we published an article on Richard Strauss by the eminent English critic of the *Manchester Guardian*, Neville Cardus. The article said that a few years after writing his *Don Quixote*, "Strauss put on his carpet slippers and velvet jacket in the *Sinfonia Domestica*, a work which has been curiously underrated even by admirers of Strauss, a work about which the critics have generally written pompously, presumably because the composer bathes the baby and employs it with geniality and gusto — and here and there with a masterful restraint." Cardus refers to the "comfortable bourgeois sentiment" of the *Sinfonia Domestica*, a well chosen phrase which describes it aptly. The program of the work does not actually have to be taken into consideration for enjoyment of this music, but it might be well to acquaint oneself with it.

Most conductors tend to treat this work a bit too seriously. They miss the humor. I've always thought that Strauss intended the work to be performed in a good-humored manner, and that is exactly the way he plays it in this recording (evidently taken from the air in 1944). It is a surprisingly good recording, live and well-balanced and consistent in its unfoldment. Krauss treats the work much more seriously and misses much of its "comfortable bourgeois sentiment"; he glories, perhaps not unwisely, in its symphonic orchestration and makes us realize its instrumental grandeur. There is more richness of sound in the London reproduction and better gradations of dynamics, but my own preference remains with the composer who seems definitely to be enjoying himself. After all, he knew more about that family life he evoked and he assuredly had plenty of good humor toward it. —P.H.R.

Concerto

BRAHMS: *Double Concerto in A minor, Op. 102; Jean Fournier (violin), An-*

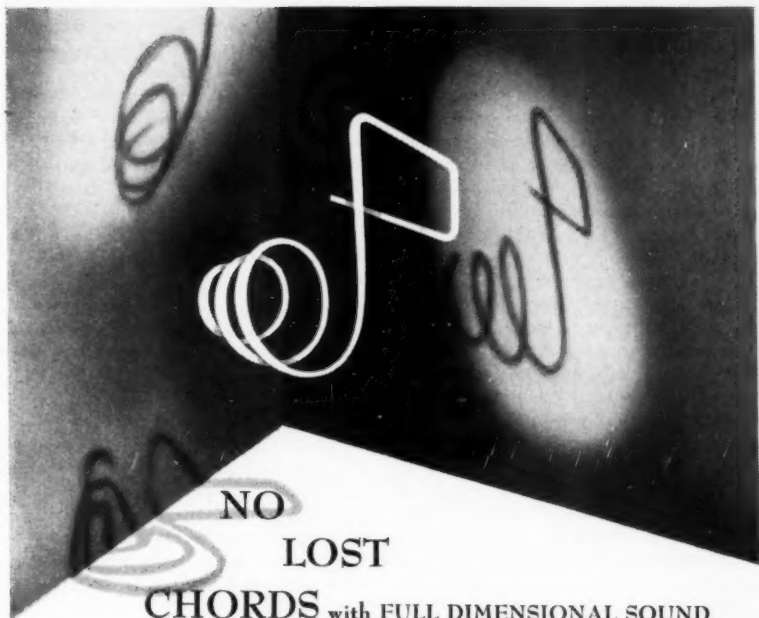
tonio Janigro (cello), Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Hermann Scherchen. Westminster LP disc WL-5117, \$5.95.

The Same; Nathan Milstein (violin), Gregor Piatigorsky (cello), Robin Hood Dell Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner. RCA Victor LP disc LM-1191, \$5.45.

▲AFTER WRITING his four symphonies, Brahms used the full orchestra only in the present work in which he welded together two solo instruments and the accompaniment in a new way, avoiding conventional effect. The welding of the instruments was generally closely tied to the structure of the work, though there are passages of display. The opening movement is muscular and wiry, but the slow movement is serene and lovely. In the finale, Brahms utilized his favorite gypsy music. Of the two solo instruments, the greater prominence lies with the cellist, yet the writing for the soloists is so full in many passages that the work often takes on the character of a string sextet.

Victor recently reissued its older version by Heifetz, Feuermann, Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra (LCT-1016) in which the original harsh quality of the recording has been bettered. Of Victor's two sets, I prefer the older one. This new one is not too well recorded, and Reiner seems less sympathetic to the music than did Ormandy. Yet, in neither of these performances are the soloists completely compatible in style. For all Feuermann's rich tonal qualities, I lean toward the Italian cellist Janigro's gracious artistry, with which the fine tonal quality of the French violinist Fournier blends most satisfactorily. One has a feeling of a true partnership at all times which does not prevail in the other performances. Scherchen's orchestral direction suggests a close intimacy with the score and a true affection for the music. The playing of the slow movement is given the fullest poetic meaning. The recording of this performance is the best to date; it has tonal wealth and liveness, and a wholly equitable balance. —P.H.R.

The American Record Guide



**NO
LOST
CHORDS** with FULL DIMENSIONAL SOUND

Like the great performances you have heard in the concert hall, Capitol's Full Dimensional Sound recordings achieve these ideals of musical expression . . . *realism — depth — balance*. In a symphony, each choir of instruments is clearly defined, while retaining its full musical relationship to the orchestra as a whole. Because FDS retains the balance and depth, as well as the full range of the performance, the music is revealed in proper perspective without sacrifice of total values — *no lost chords!*

Select Capitol FDS Classics. A rewarding musical experience will be yours — always.

Hear these superb Capitol FDS Classics

GLAZOUNOV: *The Seasons — Ballet Suite*
Roger Désormière conducting the French
National Symphony Orchestra

RAVEL: *Introduction et Allegro*
DEBUSSY: *Dances Sacrée et Profane*
Ann Mason Stockton, Harpist
The most famous compositions ever written
for harp, on one long play record.



FULL DIMENSIONAL SOUND

Capitol
CLASSICS

GRIEG: *Concerto in A minor, Op. 16;* Clifford Curzon (piano) with the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Anatole Fistoulari. London LP disc LLP-512, \$5.95.

The Same: Dinu Lipatti (piano) with Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Alceo Galliera, coupled with SCHUMANN: *Concerto in A minor, Op. 54;* Lipatti, von Karajan, Philharmonia Orchestra. Columbia LP disc ML-4525, \$5.45.

▲THERE are five other performances of this concerto on LP discs, none of which is truly satisfying. One suspects that some of the great modern virtuosos perform this work because it is expected of them — its musical qualities being not valued in terms of personal interpretative response. Others tend to underestimate one or the other side of Grieg's creative urge — his efforts toward symphonic breadth and grandeur or his true feeling for tranquil lyricism and poetic beauty.

No one, since Arthur de Greef (who recorded this work in the late 1920s), has seemed so completely *en rapport* with the music as the late Lipatti. He never played any music with which he did not have a sympathetic response, and he worked out each and every performance with great care. When Columbia issued the latest Gieseking performance of this concerto, I protested to the company that it should have issued instead Lipatti's version. I note on the envelope the caption, "Issued by Request," which suggests that others besides myself knew the Lipatti performance and valued it highly. I am glad that Columbia chose to re-issue Lipatti's wonderful performance of the Schumann concerto (previously released on ML-2195 — 10 inch) with his Grieg. Lipatti achieves true symphonic breadth and grandeur in both works where the music asks for virtuosity of approach and in the prevailing lyrical passages plays with heartfelt warmth and exceptional beauty. Galliera proves himself a most compatible companion in the Grieg.

I had expected great things out of Clifford Curzon, but he does not seem wholly at ease in this work. The whole opening section lacks fervor and conviction,

and curiously the recording is not good, though it improves later on. Curzon is more sympathetic to Grieg's lyricism which makes his performance seem on occasion disjointed. The excellence of the original 78 rpm British Columbia recording of the Lipatti performance has been fully realized in the Columbia transfer to LP, and is for me a most satisfyingly resonant and lifelike reproduction.

—P.H.R.

HANDEL: *Concertos for Harpsichord and Orchestra — No. 13 in F major; No. 14 in A major; No. 19 in D minor;* Frank Pelleg (harpsichord) and the Zurich Radio Orchestra conducted by Walter Goehr. Handel Society LP disc, HDL 3, \$5.95.

▲IN SPEAKING of the *Concerti Grossi*, Romain Rolland has remarked that "none of his (Handel's) works are more celebrated and less understood." Handel himself attached a particular value to them and rearranged the music a number of times, often using whole movements in other works such as the second set of organ or harpsichord concertos, from which three are here recorded. Thus, the second and third movements of *No. 13* are actually transcriptions of two movements from the *No. 9* concerto grosso of celebrated *Opus 6*, and the 14th harpsichord opus is largely derived from concerto grosso *No. 11*. These transcribed works are familiar enough as organ concertos and as such have been often recorded. As harpsichord concertos, however, despite occasional vestiges of organ technique, they are just as powerful and sprightly as their forebearer, the mighty *Opus 6*. Particularly nice are the 13th — known as "*the Cuckoo and the Nightingale*", and the 14th — a large work in three athletic movements.

Mr. Pelleg, the young Israeli pianist who will be remembered for his Bach recordings, plays rather drily but with a good deal of spirit. The Zurich orchestra could not be called first-rate but Goehr, an old hand at making orchestras sound good, whips them into shape most of the time. The recording is realistic but sometimes the combined string and harpsichord tone is not always clearly differentiated.

—D.R.

The American Record Guide

Chamber Music

BINET: *String Quartet*; **Petru Manoliu** (violin), **Jules Joubert** (violin), **Louis Reisacher** (viola), **Fritz Moser** (cello). **BRUNNER:** *Sonata for Flute and Piano*; **Andre Jaunet** (flute) and **Walther Frey** (piano). **SCHOECK:** *Toccata for Piano, Op. 29*; **Walther Frey**. London LP disc LLP-498, \$5.95.

▲LONDON has been good enough to present to the record-buying public works by three young Swiss composers. As this sort of practice is much to be praised and altogether much too rare, it seems a pity that three somewhat innocuous compositions (which hardly represent the best work being done in Switzerland today) have been engraved for everyone's perusal.

The *Binet Quartet* is the strongest piece presented here. Cast in the familiar three movement form with expressions and devices mostly out of Ravel and Stravinsky, it makes an impression for its sweetness and grace. Brunner's *Flute Sonata* is gratefully written but it lacks shape and a sense of destination. Schoeck's short *Toccata* is written in an all-too-familiar international style with the result that no individuality of any sort can be seen.

London's recording is clean and bright, but (as on other occasions) there is a disturbing background hum. —C.J.L.

FAURE: *Piano Quartet No. 1 in C minor, Op. 15*; *Sonata No. 2 for Cello and Piano, Op. 117*; Polymusic LP disc PRLP 1007, \$5.95. *String Quartet, Op. 121*; *Violin Sonata No. 2, Op. 108*; Polymusic LP disc PRLP 1008, \$5.95; Guilet String Quartet and Daniel Guilet (violin), David Soyer (cello), Gaby Casadesus and Leopold Mittman (pianists).

▲THE WORKS here recorded are, with the exception of one, the early *Piano Quartet*, quite late and present, as it were, the pinnacle of Faure's elusive and lovely art. Of them Norman Suckling has said: "The last six of Faure's chamberworks offer a remarkable parallel with Beethoven's last quartets. They represent the highest peak of excellence touched by April, 1952

their composer; they incline toward a refinement of expression which concedes nothing to the desire for superficial attractions. . . ." The two sonatas are instantly ingratiating and the string quartet, written at 79, the year of the composer's death, remains one of the great works of the 20th-century.

Probably no finer ensemble could have been gathered for these recordings than the present artists. The Guilet Quartet performs almost instinctively the music of Fauré and Mme. Casadesus' and Mr. Guilet's playing in the violin sonata are near perfection. David Soyer and Mr. Mittman are somewhat less completely at home in the sometimes knotty cello sonata but the performance is none the less distinguished. The recording is quite clear although the balance of strings and piano is sometimes less than perfect. —D.R.

FAURE: *Violin Sonata No. 2, Op. 108*; **HAYDN:** *Duet in D major for Violin and Cello*; **MARTINU:** *Duo for Violin and Cello*; **Ruth Posselt** (violin), **Samuel Mayes** (cello), and **Joseph Rezits** (piano); Festival LP disc FLP 70-203, \$5.95.

▲TWO of the works on this disc are first recordings. The Haydn is a very lovely little opus anticipating, in many ways, the wonderful charm of the Mozart string duos. Probably written for Anton Kraft of *Cello Concerto* fame, this duo — which takes only ten minutes or so of playing time — manages not only to exploit both instruments but also to produce some characteristically captivating music. The Martinu duo, written in 1928, is in two movements — *andante moderato* and *rondo*. Clearly showing the benign influence of his teacher, Albert Roussel, the work moves effortlessly and expertly toward a very lively conclusion.

All three artists are highly competent. The ensemble between Miss Posselt and Mr. Mayes is particularly good. Consequently, the Haydn and the Martinu seem to be the main attractions on the disc. The sonata is an intimate work and should be treated lovingly. With that as criterion I cannot help thinking that the performance of Miss Posselt and Mr.

Rezits, brilliant as it is, is far too full of bravura and "effect" for the good of the music, and much prefer that of Mr. Guilet and Mme. Casadesus, a review of which is included in this section. The recording is quite good except that the highs of the violin come out a bit raw.

—D.R.

MOZART: *Quartet in D major, K. 575; Quartet in D major, K. 499; Stuyvesant String Quartet.* Philharmonia LP disc PH-105, \$5.95.

▲THE EXCELLENCE of the ensemble playing in both of these works, the perfection of tone and balance, and the unqualified musical absorption add up to sterling performances. Yet, to me, for all the homogeneity of purpose, the aim for technical precision has excluded an essential feeling for rhythmic rubati which belongs to Mozart's music. Neither of these works are among the composer's most concentrated quartets, which can lead an ensemble to believe that forthrightness lets the music speak best for itself. Of the two performances, I prefer that of *K. 575*, originally written for King Friedrich Wilhelm (who played the cello), for here Alan Shulman — the highly gifted cellist of the Stuyvesant group — is given opportunities to show his talents. Of the three performances of this opus on LP, the present one has more vitality and meaning than the other two. The recording of both quartets is excellent in every way.

—P.H.R.

MOZART: *Clarinet Quintet in A major, K. 581; Leopold Wlach and Vienna Konzerthaus Quartet.* Westminster LP disc WL-5112, \$5.95.

The Same: Benny Goodman and American Art Quartet. Columbia LP disc ML-4483, \$5.45.

▲THE VIENNESE and the American styles vary considerably in Mozart's music. This affords an interesting example. One recalls Aristotle's oft quoted remark, applicable to style, "It is not sufficient to know what one ought to say, but one must know how to say it." Reconvert these words to apply to musical performance and one must admit that both of these ensembles have endeavored to follow their

meaning. It is as much the interpretation of Mozart's tempo markings as of musical values that varies these performances. The opening *Allegro* is taken at a much faster pace by Goodman and the American Art Quartet. I have pointed out previously in relation to this quintet that it is not lamentative like his famous *G minor, K. 516* (for strings), yet it has underlying emotional pensiveness. Its transparent and radiant beauty often obscure its pathos — its elation can veil its plaintive qualities. The Viennese group evidently feel that its plaintive qualities should not be ignored, and they accordingly revere them. The American group quite evidently takes a converse viewpoint.

The pacing of both the opening movement and the minuet by the Viennese is slower. The musical lines are treated more broadly. Wlach's clarinet tone is fuller and richer than Goodman's, and one feels that this pace serves him advantageously. The string players of the Viennese group often find more meaning in Mozart's musical thoughts; the Americans are content to achieve tonal polish and permit the clarinetist to exploit his more elative voice. Both approaches in the opening movement serve the music advantageously, though I think a modification of both would achieve a happy medium. (It will be interesting to hear Decca's announced recording by Reginald Kell.) In the minuet the Viennese group looks forward to the first Trio section, which definitely profits as a result of their slightly slower pacing of the movement. In the lovely *Larghetto* the Viennese realize the greater poetry in tone.

Benny Goodman has developed a more gracious tonal quality since he recorded this work for Victor before the war. He is, as we all know, an exceptionally gifted musician. Neither he nor Wlach, however, vary their tonal quality to any great extent. The recording in both cases is excellent — live and resonant. —P.H.R.

MOZART: *Sonata No. 40, K. 454; PAGANINI: Caprice No. 24, Op. 1; Mischa Elman (violin) with Wolfgang Rosé (piano);* Victor LP disc LM 1208, \$5.45.

The American Record Guide

▲ELMAN, who has been playing publicly since the age of ten (that was in 1902) has, in recent years, apparently restudied a number of works. This mellowing appears to good effect in his new recording of the Wieniawski concerto. In the present Mozart, however, it allows for a slightly portentous approach, full of dynamic changes, perfectly appropriate to, say, a Brahms's sonata. The ensemble between the violinist and Mr. Rosé is not so smooth as it might be. The Paganini is quite another matter. This work (the Brahms and Rachmaninoff variations on which are much more famous) requires that the violinist have a full bag of tricks and Mr. Elman has most of them. Those he doesn't have are a fluid *glissando* technique and complete articulation of the more rapid passages. These are found in plentitude in Ricci's recording of the entire opus. The recording is lifelike and, as is now customary, favors the violinist. —D.R.

RAVEL: *Introduction and Allegro*; Ann Mason Stockton (harp), Arthur Glegghorn (flute), Mitchell Lurie (clarinet) and the Hollywood String Quartet; **DEBUSSY:** *Dances Sacrée et Profane*; Miss Stockton and an ensemble of strings conducted by Felix Slatkin; Capitol 10" LP disc, \$3.98.

▲IN 1906 when Ravel was writing his now famous septet he wrote, "I'm working on a chamber concerto for small orchestra in which I'm trying to deprive each instrument of the star part. It is most difficult." Ravel, as in all things, was completely successful in this and the result was an extraordinarily well-integrated *morceau* which never seems to show its age. The two dances of Debussy were written in 1904 for the then newly invented chromatic harp. The first, befitting its title, is both stately and modal, the second is a clean limbed and faintly lascivious waltz.

The Hollywood group of instrumentalists play extremely well and Miss Stockton is an expert harpist. For the Ravel, however, I still prefer the beautifully detailed and integrated recording by Laura Newell and the Stuyvesant Quartet Group (Col. X167). The Debussy has been very well April, 1952

performed by Edward Vito and the Stradivari Quartet (Strad. SLP 1007) but the work comes off better if the full string orchestra indicated by Debussy is used as here. The recording is very glossy and the balance, particularly between the soloists in the Ravel, is excellent.—D.R.

SCHUBERT: *Quartet in A minor, Op. 29* Vienna Konzerthaus Quartet. Westminster LP disc WL-5115, \$5.95.

▲THOSE who think they are adverse to chamber music should hear Westminster's recording of Schubert's "Trout" Quintet (WL-5025). It has succeeded in breaking down more opposition among die-hards who contend that they value orchestral above chamber music. After the "Trout" quintet, I would recommend this wonderful quartet, which never grows old in memory or fails to sustain its depth of expression and endless beauty in repetition. The drama of the first movement — its poetry of universal import, the lovely *Andante* based on an entr'acte from the *Rosamunde* music (more poetic here than in the original), the minuet with its singular strength of purpose, and the brilliant finale — all form a perfect work from which one can think of nothing withdrawn or added.

These Viennese players play with breadth of tone and true affection, though perhaps not with the consistent suavity that the music asks. The first violinist seems rather prominent on occasion but this is sometimes difficult to avoid in Schubert. The recording is lifelike and full-toned. —P.H.R.

Keyboard

CHOPIN: *Etudes, Op. 10 and Trois Nouvelles Etudes*; Concert Hall LP disc 1132, \$5.95. *Etudes, Op. 25 and Herold Variations, Op. 12*; Robert Goldsand (piano). Concert Hall LP disc 1133, \$5.95.

▲CHOPIN'S magnificent *Etudes*, the most successful marriage of love and duty on record, are a continual spur to pianists and very often a disappointment to listeners. They not only abound with tech-

nical difficulties — both small and fantastic — but they demand a musical strength and a huge variety of expressive communications clearly based on a master plan of making direct music. There is scarcely another body of keyboard material that is so recalcitrant to execution, or so rewarding when all of the many necessary interpretive ingredients are present.

Robert Goldsand has admirable technical facilities, even though his pedaling may be a trifle obvious. But he is not, alas, the musician to hold all of these wondrous pieces together. Time and time again his work is filled with unnecessary retardations, fussy phraseology, and other mannerisms that harm the structure of these mostly straightforward pieces. If there are any comparable pieces of music that deserve to be played in time (as closely as possible without hitting dead center) than Chopin's *Etudes*, your reviewer has not yet heard them. Yet many insist on violating this principle (and Chopin himself pleaded that the *Etudes* should be played in time) in many of the numbers and when they do they get into varying kinds of musical trouble.

As far as recording history goes, I can recall only one player who had the requisite technical powers, the musical ability, and the stamina to get through the 24 *etudes* largely unscathed. That pianist was Wilhelm Backhaus. Accordingly, his performances (in Victor set M-43 — long withdrawn) are considered by at least one group of Chopin lovers and players among the dearest legacies the phonograph has ever offered.

I should add that Goldsand's playing of the three new *etudes* and the *Herold Variations* seems satisfactory. The music in both cases is slight but stamped with the Polish master's touch. Recording here and elsewhere is clear but not quite full enough. —C.J.L.

COUPERIN: *Mass for the Parishes*; William W. Austin (organ). 440 Records LP disc 12-5, \$5.95.

▲THE EARLIEST known of Couperin-Le-Grand's output, this mass first appeared in 1690 in a volume which included the same composer's organ *Mass for the*

Convents. The present recording includes only the organ settings by Couperin; the alternating chants have been omitted.

Delicate and powerful, enormously-varied, the *Mass for the Parishes* is a masterful work that deserves acquaintance. It gets played moderately well by William W. Austin, organist at Cornell University. The organ, an Aeolian-Skinner, is unfortunately not up to the best American standards and miles behind the two instruments that Helmut Walcha has introduced American listeners to (via Decca recordings). Inner parts are often muddy, especially in the writing in the bass clef, and many of the registrations employed produce ugly sounds.

For such a work as this, however, a little patience with an instrument not quite up to scratch must be tolerated. In any case, everything seems to have been recorded faithfully and there is nary a sound of surface noise. —C.J.L.

SCHUMANN: *Carnaval, Op. 9*; London 10" LP disc LS-528, \$4.95. **CHOPIN:** *Waltzes, Op. 64, Nos. 1, 2, 3; Mazurkas, Op. 51, Nos. 1, 2, 3; Polonaises, Op. 40, Nos. 1, 2*; London 10" LP disc LS-532, \$4.95. All played by Nikita Magaloff (piano).

▲NIKITA MAGALOFF has long been admired by musicians for his ripe musical taste and his command over his instrument. One has wondered why a recording company never took a real chance on him. London, by coming to his and his admirers' rescue, is due our thanks. Magaloff's *Carnaval* seems as close to the printed score and the spirit of this completely wonderful work as anyone who has given it to us on records during the past two decades. It may indeed lack the enormous personal projection of a Rachmaninoff, but there are certainly no other deficiencies I can find. Dexterity of finger and foot, clean sweetness of mind and heart are all present in this very fine performance.

Magaloff's Chopin is no less satisfactory. Everything he presents stands up straight and proud like the pieces the Polish master imagined he created, not like the sickly things two generations of

The American Record Guide

rubato-happy players have made of them. I am sure that almost everyone will enjoy the salubrious effect that attends even a casual listening to these discs.—C.J.L.

Voice

BACH: *Cantata No. 4, Christ lag in Todesbanden*; **Helmut Krebs** (tenor), **Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau** (basso), **Maria Jung** (organ) and **Chorus of the State School of Music, Frankfurt**, with **Göttingen Bach Festival Orchestra**, conducted by **Fritz Lehmann**. Decca ten-inch LP disc DL-7523, \$3.85.

BACH: *Cantata No. 6, Bleib' bei uns, denn es will Abend werden*; *Cantata No. 19, Es erhub sich ein Streit*; *Cantata No. 9, Es ist das Heil uns kommen her*; *Cantata No. 137, Lobe den Herren, den mächtigen König der Ehren*; **Claire Fassbender-Luz** (soprano), **Hetty Plümacher** (contralto), **Eva Drager** (contralto), **Werner Hohmann** (tenor), **Claus Stemmann** (tenor), **Agnes Geibel** (soprano), **Bruno Müller** (basso), and **Stuttgart Choral Society with Stuttgart Bach Orchestra**, conducted by **Hans Grischkat**. 2 Renaissance LP discs, X-34 and X-37, \$5.95 each.

▲OF THE FIVE cantatas considered here Nos. 4 and 6 are for Easter, No. 19 is for Michaelmas and Nos. 9 and 137 for the sixth and twelfth Sunday after Trinity respectively. Of these only No. 4 has enjoyed any degree of popularity. Based on a particularly lovely chorale melody (the foundation of one of the best loved chorale preludes) *Christ lag in Todesbanden*, the cantata contains a fine opening chorus and outstanding solos for tenor and bass. It is not new to records: Robert Shaw directed it for Victor several years back (now available on LP, LM 25) and long before that there was the famous Catalonian performance by the Orfeo Catala. Fritz Lehmann and the Deutsche Grammophon engineers have not achieved a sonority comparable to that of the Shaw disc, but in matters of sensitivity and communicativeness they have surpassed their predecessors. A definite improvement.

ment is the singing of the arias by soloists, whereas Shaw assigned them to his tenor and bass sections. Especial interest centers around Fischer-Dieskau, who has been winning fame abroad as a lieder-singer. His is a smooth and appealing voice and a thoroughly musical style, but he shows his range limitations here by transposing both low and high E's. Helmut Krebs, the tenor, sings his impressive aria in rather measured phrases. The choral tone is good but somewhat thickened by echo. A stronger bass line would have improved the general effect.

Cantata No. 6 is based on the story of Christ's appearance on the road to Emmaus as told in the Gospel of St. Luke. Schering points out in his preface to the Eulenburg score that in a musical as well as a narrative sense the cantata may be considered a "continuation and epitome of the scenes depicted in the *St. John Passion*." Certainly the opening chorus bears more than a family resemblance to the *Ruht wohl* of

READERS RECORD EXCHANGE & MART

Rates to subscribers 10c per word. Non-subscribers, dealers and all auction sales 15c a word.

HIGH FIDELITY EQUIPMENT BARGAINS!!
Free List. Skalamer, 435 East 74 St., New York 21, N.Y.

FINE CLASSICAL & FOLK MUSIC Collection, mostly European pressings, for Sale. Hastings, Bedford, N.Y.

DEUTSCHE GRAMOPHON presents: The Record of Historical Value: the HYMNE AN DEUTSCHLAND (New German National Anthem) Mail \$1.75 for your copy now. If interested in Deutsche Gramophon, ask for list of available records, state your needs, we have it or can get it for you. Largest assortment of German Records in the East. German American Import, 3033 Hamilton Ave., Baltimore 14, Md.

VOLS. I & II, Beethoven Sonata Society and Vols. I & II, Haydn Quartet Society, manual, for sale. Box 100-A, Amer. Rec. Guide.

BARGAIN: Imported Society Sets and singles, 60c per record. Columbia and Victor, etc. 35c each. Call Loraine 7-8931 (Dyckman St., Manhattan).

RARE VOCALS: Caruso, Slezak, Pertile, Roswaenge, Wittirsch, Cebotari, Boninsegna, Muzio, etc. Westhoff, 1451 Clayton, San Francisco, Cal.

the *St. John*; the exultation of the alto aria following this is in the spirit of Easter, the overcoming of the tragedy described in the *Passion*. If the concluding chorale is rather earnest, this too is in keeping with Christian doctrine.

No. 19 recalls the fight between St. Michael and his angels against Satan, as described in Revelation XII, 7. The outstanding musical selection is the tenor aria *Bleibt, ihr Engel, bleibt bei mir* with its obligato chorale (familiar in the *St. John Passion*) played by the trumpet. No. 9 is one of Bach's finest. Spitta says it "gives us perfect satisfaction by its masterly completeness and fulness of form." No. 137 is based on one of the most striking chorales (often sung at Christmas), its musical structure being really a set of variations on this theme. Again we have effective use of the device of an obligato trumpet playing the chorale tune against a tenor aria.

Some concern is apparent in the recording over the matter of balance, for the chorus seems to be singing beyond the orchestra. The effect is generally good, though there is a lack of point in the choral tone. The soloists, unfortunately, are too close, as they have so often been in recordings of this kind. Miss Plumacher does not manage to make light of the technical difficulties of her first aria, but she sings with intelligence and a sense of style. She seems a bit rushed by the conductor and consequently unable to give the words their due weight. Bruno Muller, the bass in all four cantatas, sings well; of the two tenors the better is Werner Hohmann. Claus Stemann, to whom falls so much of the best music, is hardly impressive. There is some imperfection in the centering of the copies reviewed, with resulting pitch waver.

—P.L.M.

POULENC: CHABRIER, DEBUSSY AND SATIE: *Songs*; **Pierre Bernac**, (baritone), and **Francis Poulenc** (piano). Columbia LP disc ML 4484, \$5.45.

▲ **A CHARMING COMPANION** disc to their previous recording of Poulenc's *Banalités* and *Chansons Villageoises* (Col. ML 4333), this collection again presents

260

unique interpretations of works by "the greatest living writer of concert songs." These, new to discs, are the *Quatre poèmes* and *Calligrammes* of Guillaume Apollinaire and the *Tu vois le feu du soir* and *Main dominée par le cœur* of Paul Eluard. Poulenc's gift lies not only in the impeccable purity of his melody but also in his impassioned lyrical outbursts. Usually when the sensuality just begins to suffocate the composer romps away into a spirited parody of the music-hall manner. These songs continue well the Poulenc tradition.

Chabrier is represented by *L'Île heureuse* and *Villanelle des petits canards*, one slow and sombre, the other gay and melodious. The famous *Beau soir* of Debussy begins his group which also includes *L'Echelonement des haies* and the extremely beautiful tryptich, *Le Promenoir des deux amants*. The recital ends with Erik Satie's witty and rousing, *Trois Melodies*, dealing, respectively, with the *ennui* of a misanthropic bronze frog in the middle of a garden, the stupid Chrysaline and Lewis Carroll's Mad Hatter concerned over his stopped watch after he used "only the very best butter" on it — the latter is marked *genre Gounod*.

Bernac's voice and style is best in the Poulenc and Satie works. In the Debussy, his limited vocal resources do not exude the necessary tonal richness. The recording is a model of fidelity and Mr. Poulenc is, of course, the perfect accompanist.

—D.R.

NEDBAL: *Polenblut*; **Herbert Ernst Groh**, **Rosl Seegers**, others, with the chorus and orchestra of **Radio Berlin** conducted by **Otto Dobrindt**; **LAN-NER:** *Waltzes*; **Radio Berlin Orchestra** conducted by **Otto Dobrindt**. Urania LP Set URLP 215, 2 discs, \$11.90.

▲ **OSKAR NEDBAL**, a pupil of Dvorak, was extremely well-known in Europe toward the beginning of this century. His operettas rivaled those of Lehar and Kalman in popularity. *Polenblut* was one of his most successful. The performance is both spirited and well put together. The recording is adequate and a complete translated libretto is included. —D.R.

The American Record Guide

RECORD BUYER'S GUIDE

Some Leading Dealers Across the Country

New York City

HARRY BERLINER MUSIC SHOP
154 - 4th Ave. at 14th St.

ELAINE MUSIC SHOP,
9 East 44 St.

MORTIMER H. FOGEL
92 Liberty Street

HAYNES - GRIFFIN
420 Madison Ave. at 48th St.

LIBERTY MUSIC SHOPS
450 Madison Ave., at 50th St.

RABSON'S RECORD SHOP
111 West 52nd Street

G. SCHIRMER, INC.
3 East 43rd Street

Tucson, Arizona

GRABE ELECTRIC CO.
26 East Congress

Berkeley, Calif.

ART MUSIC COMPANY
2400 Telegraph Ave.

Los Angeles, California

BIRKEL-RICHARDSON CO.
730 West 7th Street

GATEWAY TO MUSIC
3089 Wilshire Boulevard

San Francisco, California

THE RECORD SHOP
14 Tillman Place

SHERMAN, CLAY & CO.
Kearney and Suter Street

New Haven, Conn.

DAVID DEAN SMITH
Elm Street at Broadway

Washington, D. C.

THE RECORD LOFT
814 - 17th St., N.W.

Chicago, Illinois

LYON & HEALY
Wabash and Jackson

Baltimore, Maryland

THE G. FRED KRANZ MUSIC CO.
327 North Charles Street

Boston, Massachusetts

MOSHER MUSIC CO., Inc.
181 Tremont Street

Minneapolis, Minnesota

SCHMITT MUSIC CENTER
86-88 South 10th Street

St. Louis, Missouri

AEOLIAN COMPANY OF MISSOURI
1004 Olive Street

Rochester, New York

THE RECORD SHOP
McCurdy & Co., Inc.
Main at Elm

Cincinnati, Ohio

THE WILLIS MUSIC CO.
124 East 4th Street

Cleveland, Ohio

G. SCHIRMER MUSIC CO.
43-45 The Arcade

Philadelphia, Pa.

WALNUT MUSIC SHOP
1118 Walnut Street

H. ROYER SMITH CO.
10th and Walnut Streets

Pittsburgh, Pa.

BENSWANGER'S
5884 Forbes St. at Shady Lane

Reading, Pa.

LEWICKI-FIELD CO.
"The Classical Record Shop"
550 Court Street

Milwaukee 2, Wisconsin

HELEN GUNNIS MUSIC SHOP
630 North Broadway

Charleston, W. Va.

GALPERIN MUSIC CO.
17 Capitol Street

INDICES

The American Record Guide

INDEX — Vol. 16, 35c

INDEX — Vol. 15, 25c

INDEX — Vol. 14, 25c

INDEX — Vol. 13, 20c

INDEX — Vol. 12, 20c

INDEX — Vol. 11, 15c

INDEX — Vol. 10, 15c

INDEX — Vol. 9, 15c

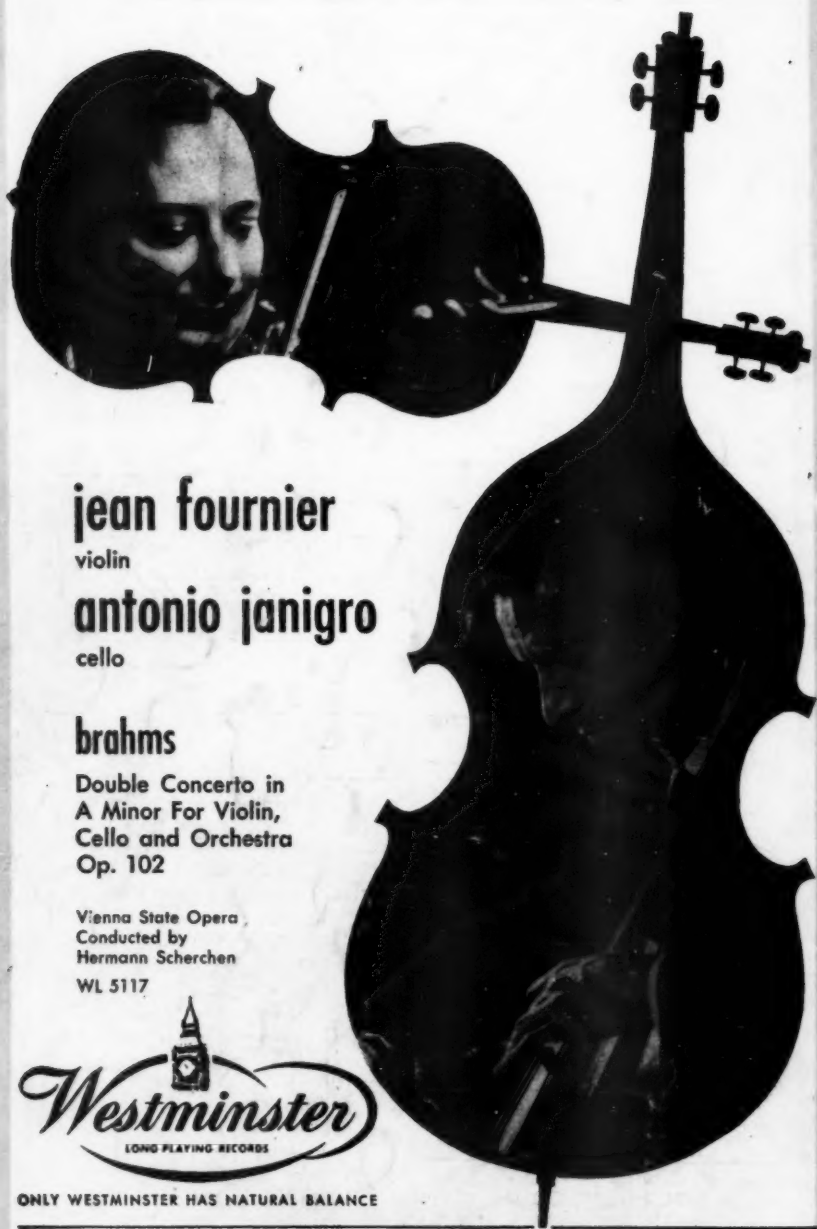
INDEX — Vol. 8, 20c

INDEX — Vol. 7, 20c

Send stamps or money order

Write for prices of back copies still in print.

Index to Vol. 16, ready in March.



jean fournier

violin

antonio janigro

cello

brahms

Double Concerto in
A Minor For Violin,
Cello and Orchestra
Op. 102

Vienna State Opera
Conducted by
Hermann Scherchen
WL 5117



ONLY WESTMINSTER HAS NATURAL BALANCE

